MEDMENHAM
BUCKS

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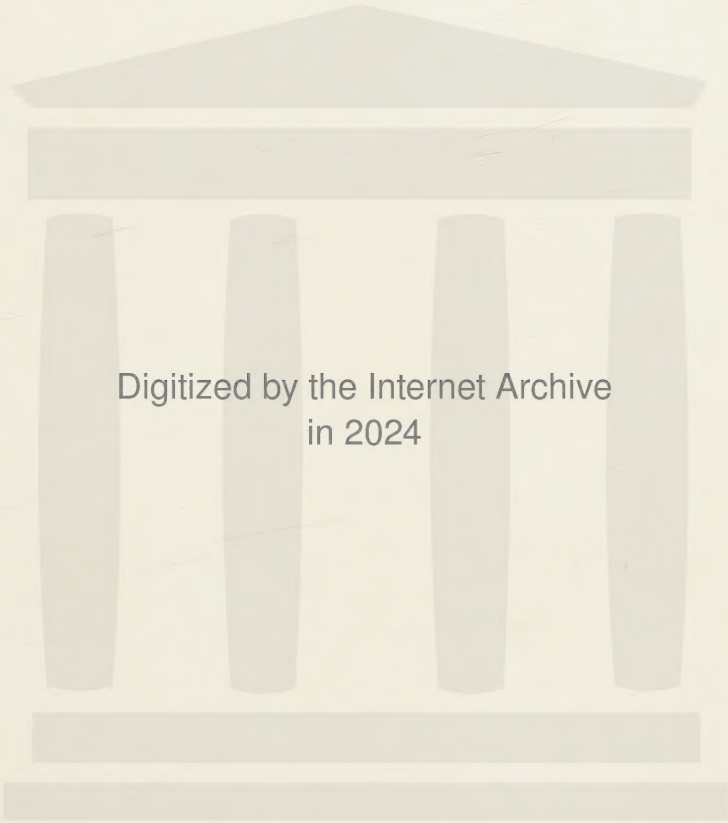
1128
Bockmer
Lodge Farm
Inn
J. Peters
The Manor House
Yew Tree
Henley
Westfield
Ferry
The River

to Marlow
Hungerford
to Marlow
Camp
Ice River

THE MANOR AND PARISH RECORDS OF MEDMENHAM

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE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MEDMENHAM VILLAGE
Joseph Pike

MEDMENHAM VILLAGE

AS it appeared in the closing years of the nineteenth century.

Frontispiece.

THE MANOR AND PARISH RECORDS OF MEDMENHAM

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

BY

ARTHUR H. PLAISTED

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.
39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON, E.C. 4
NEW YORK, TORONTO
BOMBAY, CALCUTTA AND MADRAS
1925

TO MY WIFE

who

in the fitness of things

was born into the world on

All Saints' Day

Except the Lord build the house, their labour is but lost that build it:
Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.

PSALM 127

INTRODUCTION

NE of the things which surprised me when I came to Medmenham nearly ten years ago was that little seemed to be known about what happened in the village only last century, and that much of what was written about this neighbourhood merely perpetuated ancient fables. I soon discovered a new pleasure in hunting through official muniments concerning this part of the world, and as the fever increased I became a diligent collector of historical records. In the following pages I have briefly set out the story of my voyage of discovery.

Although the idea of the book is defined by its title, it may be well to add a word of explanation. The available materials have been grouped into chapters which fall naturally into self-contained sections. As the ownership of the manor passes into a new line of descent, so the centre of interest proceeds from one house to another, and in that way the events of the first five chapters form one intertwined story. The second part of the book is devoted to the institutions of the manor : i.e. Medmenham Abbey and Medmenham Church, which were founded and endowed out of the estates of the manor, and Medmenham village, where the tenants of the lordship dwelt. The concluding chapters gather up miscellaneous information of general interest.

I have refrained from giving in detail the authority for every statement because, to the ordinary reader, the effect would be more bewildering than helpful. In passages where family names occur, as well as in place-names, any variations in the spelling have been faithfully reproduced, and where technical terms have been used, the reader is referred to a glossary at the end

of the book. A list of the principal sources of information will also be found there. The passages recited verbatim in the text have been considered worth preserving in that form, for the reason that they give precise information from which the reader may form independent conclusions. These extracts have there been rendered in the common tongue, but the originals in many cases are in mediæval Latin.

Much of the information included in this volume has been recovered from treasuries of rural lore hitherto untouched by any historian, and these facts now appear in print for the first time. In telling the story I have endeavoured to show how the several characters have contributed to the movements of the wider field of drama, because the records of our villages and towns supply the illustrations and furnish the atmosphere without which the abstractions of general history fail to impress the imagination. The partiality of Henry VIII for unlimited wives, for example, is generally regarded in history as a psychological problem or a form of disease ; but when we discover that three people intimately associated with Medmenham lost their heads over his matrimonial tribulations, we feel constrained to sit up and observe more closely the logical sequence of events.

One serious handicap in attempting to unravel a complicated narrative has been the absence of any ancient Court Rolls of the manor of Medmenham. These would have brought to light much additional knowledge concerning the lives and dealings of tenants, as well as general conveyancing business. They would have added considerable attraction to the story. They might also have interpreted certain obscure passages, which now have no particular meaning. Some Court Rolls have been handed down to present-day manorial owners. There are many others in the Record Office, the British Museum, and the Bodleian Library, but

those of the manor of Medmenham have been lost in transit between succeeding proprietors. It is not improbable that they may some day be discovered among the musty unexamined litter of some family solicitor.

I cannot sufficiently acknowledge the valuable assistance I have received from many who have helped me in gathering together information, and who have taken pains to check statements incorporated in the narrative. It has frequently involved long and patient search. I have also been greatly encouraged by the private possessors of family papers and ancient muniments, who have most kindly given me permission to make use of their records. I ought at the same time to thank several of the older generation of Medmenham for facts of which they had personal knowledge, and to express my appreciation of the courtesy by which private photographs have been reproduced.

In conclusion, I venture to commend this work to the generous tolerance of the reader. The writer of history has many pitfalls to face. He must be careful to select only such elements as fairly illustrate the spirit of the past; he should possess some capacity to form a sound judgment; and he ought never to be led away by a fervid imagination into the fields of fiction. In relating the story of Medmenham I have endeavoured to remember these essentials. I am not unconscious of many defects which a critic may discover in the following pages, but I trust that the desire to bring to light the hidden things of darkness will be more than a sufficient apology for trespassing upon perilous paths where angels have feared to tread.

ARTHUR H. PLAISTED.

MEDMENHAM VICARAGE,
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE,
1st January 1925.

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CHAPTER I

THE DAWN OF HISTORY

" Then from the bleak coast that hears
The German Ocean roar, deep-blooming, strong,
And yellow hair'd, the blue-eyed Saxon came."

Liberty

JAMES THOMSON (1700–48)

CHAPTER I

THE DAWN OF HISTORY

To get a fair view of Medmenham in the past, we must go beyond the sea to the land which was the home of the English when this island of Britain was a province of the Roman Empire. In the peninsula which parts the North Sea from the Baltic dwelt three tribes of the Teutonic family: in the northern district the Jutes, along the sandy flats of Holstein the Saxons, and between them the English, all banded together by the ties of a common blood and a common speech, and sharing together the name of Englishmen. But, in order to follow the development of events by which this island became Britain, it is necessary to look further backward into the earlier conditions prevailing in our own part of the world.

PRIMITIVE EARTHWORKS

The earliest traces of human habitation at Medmenham survive in the defensive earthworks of Danesfield. For that reason it is worth while examining them closely, and contrasting them with similar discoveries elsewhere, because comparative archæology is the one and only key which can unlock the prehistoric secrets of Medmenham. According to the classification adopted by the Committee on Ancient Earthworks and Fortified Enclosures, the entrenchment at Danesfield is of the type known as a promontory fort, i.e. a fortress partly inaccessible by reason of precipice, cliff, or water, and additionally defended by artificial works.

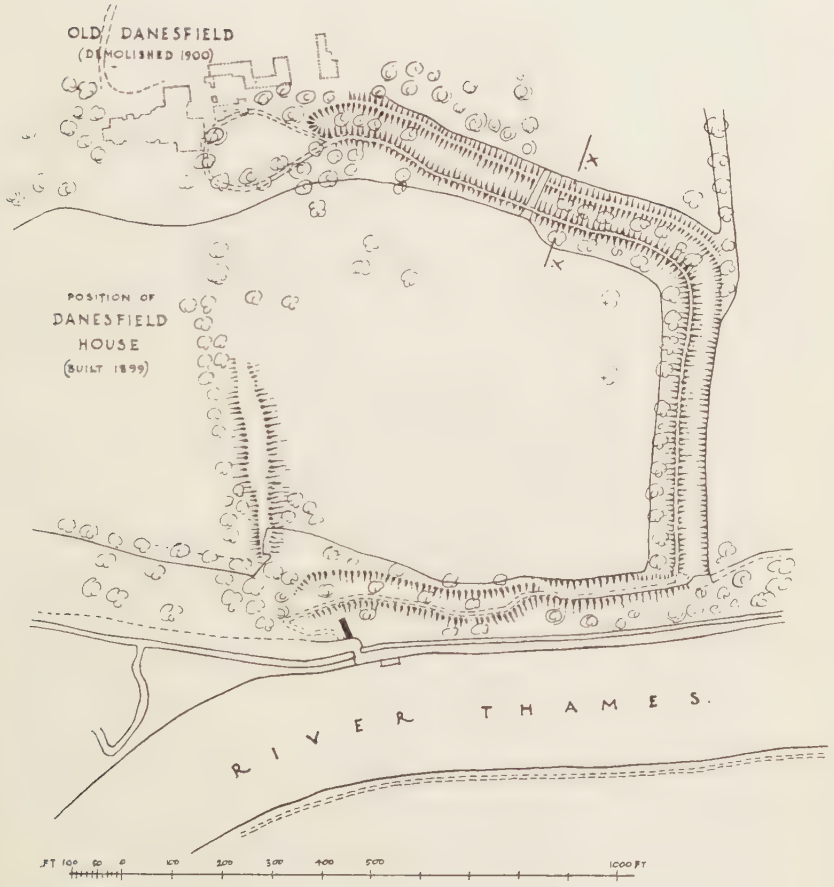
The promontory fort is distinguished by simplicity

of plan, economy of labour, and the absence of any discernible provision for the herding of cattle. The latter distinction is most remarkable. At their fullest extent the earthworks of Danesfield never covered more than 20 acres. This indicates that such a camp was built by a people who possessed but few cattle, by a people who had lost their cattle, or by invaders who came to establish themselves in a new country. It was not the work of a settled pastoral or agricultural people, because the principal wealth of primitive man was represented by cattle. Are these defences then attributable to the Neolithic hunter? Tradition would ascribe them to the Saxon or the Dane, but the evidence of parallel examples elsewhere is overwhelmingly in favour of their more ancient origin.

The earthworks at Danesfield were in their full extent a miniature of the Dyke Hills at Dorchester, and the conclusion of competent authorities is that both works are of the same period. The high double valla and the intervening ditch show a similarity of design which is scarcely mistakable, and both have the Thames for their southern boundary. From the river bed adjoining the Dorchester Dykes have been recovered bronze daggers and spear-heads, also shields of British type. Within the same entrenchments have been found flint flakes and stone implements. These evidences alone would suggest that the Dorchester Camp had its origin in the Stone Age, and possibly in a still more remote antiquity. The discovery of coins of later periods within the same encampment makes it clear that the entrenchments passed successively into British, Roman, and Saxon occupation.

Some such development of events must have attended the long history of the earthworks at Danesfield. They were built to surround what was probably

· CAMP AT DANESFIELD ·



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the first human settlement in this neighbourhood, and they were the work of a people who felt obliged to furnish themselves with artificial protection against hostile attack. The original entrance to the Danesfield Camp is not now evident, but it possessed an easy access to the river through a break in the chalk cliffs. The defences on the north and east consisted of a ditch with an inner rampart and an outer bank. At its strongest point the rampart is 17½ feet high, 63 feet wide, the ditch being 12½ feet deep, 70 feet wide. If the inference is correct that these entrenchments are the work of a primitive race, then the camp is probably contemporary with the Dyke Hills at Dorchester, and in that case it may be presumed that the first settlement of man took place in this neighbourhood during the Stone Age, which occurred throughout Southern Britain about the year 3000 B.C.

When the house at Danesfield was being built about A.D. 1790, warlike implements were discovered when making a walk round the rampart; but Thomas Langley, who recorded the incident, never saw the implements. A bronze spear-head in the possession of Mr. A. H. Cocks was unearthed during the demolition of the western valla for the erection of the present house, but no systematic search has ever been made to discover the hidden secrets which would reconstruct the history of primitive man in this neighbourhood. It is thus a field for future enterprise, which might possibly discover in the vicinity something far more reminiscent of antiquity than the striking exhibition of Roman remains now treasured in Hambleden Museum.

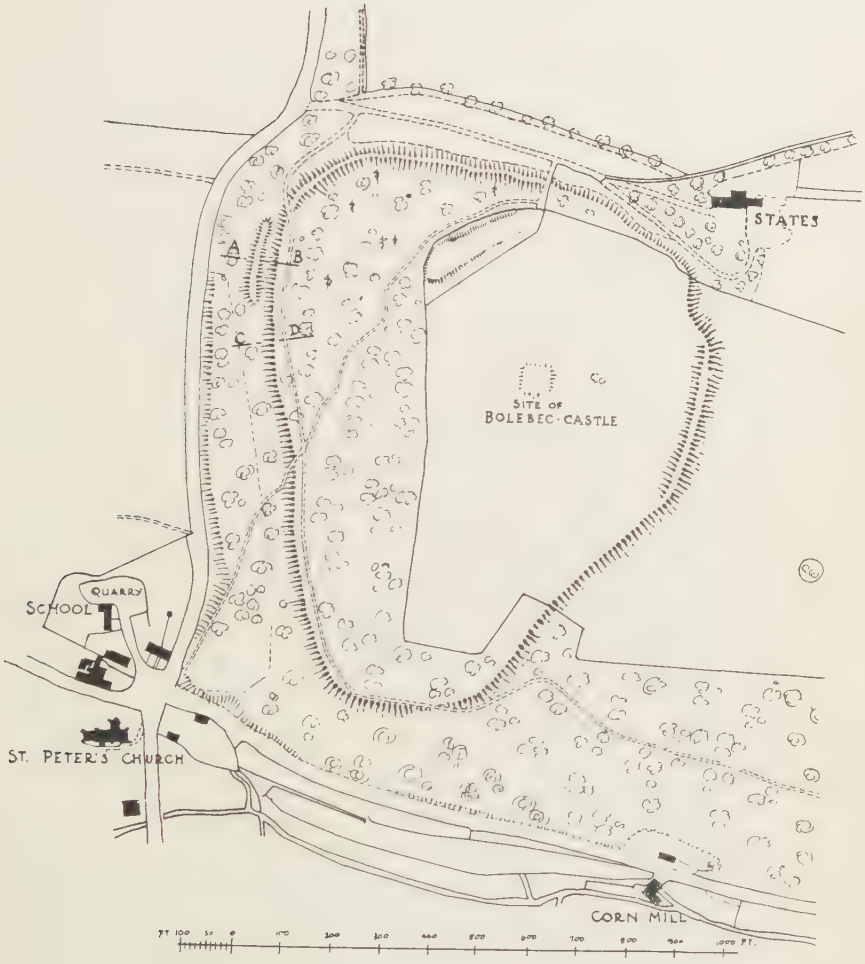
The identification of the earthworks with the Danish Invasion is no more than the last chapter of a long history extending back into the unknown ages, and of all its unrecorded story any association with

the Danes was probably the shortest and least interesting. On the ordnance maps of England there are thousands of Danesboroughs, Danesburys, and Danes Camps, but such names are very misleading, and the " red terror " of the pirates was often associated with many places which were probably never occupied by the invaders for any length of time.

THE CAMP IN GILLMAN'S WOOD

The hill camp in Gillman's Wood north-east of the church and south-west of States rises from 500 to 550 feet above ordnance datum, and covers an area of $16\frac{2}{3}$ acres. This encampment marks a decided advance upon the Danesfield type of promontory fortress. The distant successors of the primitive races which entrenched themselves at Danesfield found their boundaries too narrow for the accumulations of civilisation, so the people of the new age came forth and built themselves a home on the hillside, planned on more scientific lines, and constructed with more advanced ideas. This camp is of the contour type, and it belongs to an age when people were becoming independent of natural fastnesses, and were beginning to understand the value of protective works. The skill and resource of the camp builders may still be seen in the lines of their entrenchment. They availed themselves to the fullest extent of the varying slopes of the hills. Their defences were uniformly stronger upon the more assailable sides of the position. The amount of labour expended on such a camp could only be explained by the fact that it was the work of a community which had decided to make it their permanent abode. The formation of the camp suggests long generations of occupation, considerable numbers of people, and much wealth, as such things were then regarded. In general their property consisted of cattle, but there were other

CAMP IN GILLMAN'S WOOD



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sources of wealth, such as the supply of flints, hammers, and sling stones, or the provision of grain, also the command of the river, which was the principal trade route, as well as fishing and fowling.

The defences of the camp now surviving consist of a single rampart and ditch, except about 100 yards on the western side, where there is an outer bank. The rampart on the western side is $15\frac{1}{2}$ feet high and $46\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide; the ditch is $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet deep and $44\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide. On the eastern side the outlines have been much reduced by the plough. One original entrance appears to have been on the north-west, branching off from the road now leading to States. On the south-west a path, protected by a bank, still leads from the entrenchments towards an ancient spring, which supplied the camp with water. There is an agreement of opinion that hill forts, such as the contour camp at Medmenham, were occupied in this part of the country during the Bronze Age. This does not imply that they were necessarily the works of that period. The stratified discoveries in similar fortifications elsewhere point to the conclusion that men of the Bronze Age took over the earthworks of the Later Stone Age. The Bronze Age is generally reckoned to have occurred in Southern Britain about 1800 B.C., and it is probable that in the Camp of Gillman's Wood evidences will be discovered extending into the preceding Stone Age.

The idea of such a camp was to provide some amount of fold room for cattle as well as to afford shelter for the community. The ditch at the outer edge of the embankment was to break the rush of an attacking force rather than to serve as a pit for defenders, and the outer embankment would have been strengthened by a stockade. Within the shelter of the ditch, at some distance from the inflammable dwellings, were the cooking fires of the camp. The

common form of assault against these fortifications was by means of sling bolts made of burnt clay. They were used red-hot for the purpose of setting fire to the huts or to the stockade, and possibly to stampede the herds, which were the main booty to be secured.

The northern side of this camp is strewn with pits, and around the near edge of the rampart other similar pits occur. The more extensive works may be the remains of flint or gravel pits, but their nature and position would suggest that the smaller excavations were the primitive homesteads of pit dwellers, and that the larger ones were their granaries or storehouses. The floors of such dwellings were usually sunk to a depth of 6 or 8 feet, and to prevent the inflow of water the surface rim was slightly raised. They were roofed by large boughs firmly planted in the soil, and these were covered by heather or fern, rendered weather-proof with turfs, or perhaps skins. The bottom of the hut was generally filled in with some 2 feet of loose flints to secure a dry floor.

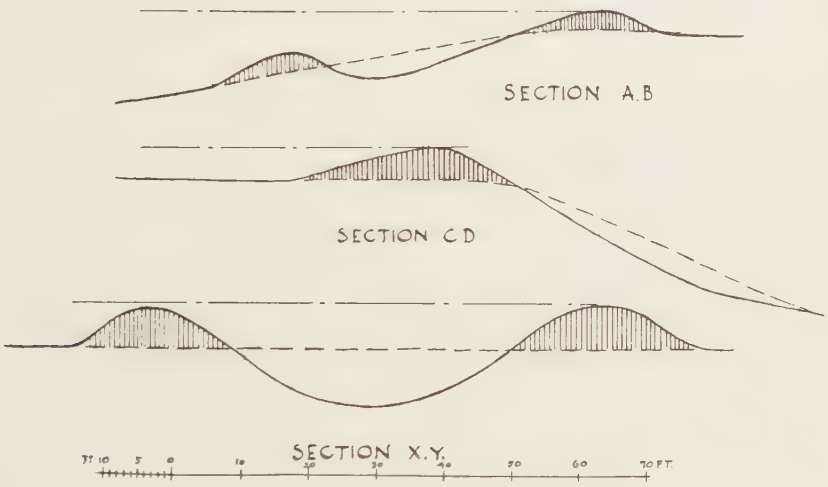
THE LLOEGRINS, GOIDELS, AND BRITONS

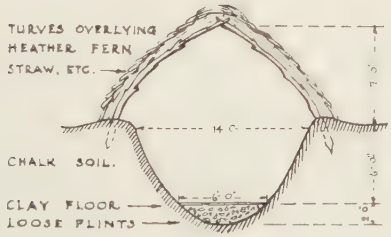
Concealed within these fortifications at Medmenham are the materials for a progressive history of these parts which would probably extend over 5000 years. Within such earthworks are hidden all the secrets of time before written history began. They are the back numbers of our village story, to which the key of knowledge is the spade; but a good deal can be conjectured by the ascertained facts of identical fortifications elsewhere.

Following the fortune of war, the earthworks at Medmenham would have fallen into the hands of successive invaders, because no army in military occupation of a country could afford to leave undefended its fortified points. The situation would have given them a sweeping command over the

SECTIONS OF EARTHWORKS

A.B.- C.D. AT GILLMAN'S WOOD
X.Y. AT DANESFIELD





—TYPE OF PIT DWELLING ON CHALK HILLS—
(CHILTERNS)

To face p. 8.

surrounding country. Its natural approaches were most formidable on the side from which hostile attack would have been commonly expected. During the Bronze Age came first the Lloegrins, a short dark race from the North of France. These were succeeded by the Goidels, a people of Celtic extraction, followed by a later invasion of Britons during the Iron Age, bringing with them Celtic civilisation and dialects.

THE ROMAN OCCUPATION

The conquest of Britain by the Romans was never complete, although the victories of Julius Agricola in A.D. 78 to 84 carried the Roman frontier to the Firths of the Forth and Clyde. In the towns the Britons became Romanised, but in rural districts traditional tribal allegiance was never extinguished. In the whole of South Buckinghamshire there is no indication of any Roman town, and of scattered traces of occupation there can be found no more than ten dwelling houses, large or small, together. The villa discovered at Hambleden may have been a comfortable country house ; but all the others are in more distant parts of the county.

THE ENGLISH INVASION

The withdrawal of the Roman legions in 411 left Britain torn with civil quarrels, weakened by the partial character of its civilisation, unable to offer united resistance to any invader, and therefore an easy prey to pirates and marauders. The internal decay and ultimate collapse of Rome set free the barbarian flood, and hordes of northern tribes poured forth to plunder Western Europe. About the year 450 the English marauders started settling in Britain. While the Romans had been in occupation they had kept the English at bay by a series of defences on the

south-east coast, organised and controlled by the Count of the Saxon Shore. For more than two centuries after the departure of the Romans the torrent of overseas invasion continued. The natural line of advance everywhere was along navigable rivers, but for many years the fortress of London barred the Thames. The conquest of the upper reaches of the river was accomplished by West Saxons, who forced their way from the south coast over the Downs of Wiltshire. For a while the great belt of forest south of the Thames stopped the incursions of the assailants, until during the second tide of invasion King Cuthwolf forced his way through with an army. In 571 he conquered the parts now forming Oxfordshire and Berkshire, then proceeded to subdue the districts along the Thames to London.

The establishment of Medmenham as an English community may be presumed to be associated with that invasion. It was no mere settlement of a superior people among tributary subjects as the Roman occupation had been, but it followed upon a war of extermination, at the end of which Britain and its villages had become England—the country not of the Britons, but of the English.

THE SETTLEMENT AT MEDMENHAM

It is a recognised fact that the sites of most historical places have been determined by well-defined geographical circumstances, and certain considerations seem to have been observed by any community in the selection of a permanent home. Ancient settlements were mostly in the region of natural store-houses, or country cross-ways, or military strongholds. These were the essentials which guided the Saxon invaders, and in the rich valley of the Thames they found one spot possessing all three features in a remarkable degree, which became

Medmenham. The stronghold was already existing, the river gave them easy access everywhere, while the productive element included well-watered agricultural land and excellent fishing.

The military and social order of the English invaders rested in the family or house rather than in the individual. Each kinsman was his kinsman's keeper. They were bound together in one fellowship, a race of landowners and land-tillers, fighting side by side on the battle-field, and dwelling together on the soil.

THE HOME OF THE MEDINGS

Personal and derivative names abound in settlements of the English invaders, particularly in districts along navigable streams. Until comparatively modern days the blue eyes and fair skin of a Saxon ancestry predominated in the river valleys of England. Their memory is still enshrined in the names of our villages and towns. From the Saxon family Bell we have Belton, Belford, Bellingdon, Bellingham; from Bass and his descendants the Basings we have Basing, Bassingham, Basingstoke, and Basingbourne; and from the old Saxon Medd, whose family were Medings, we have Medbourne, Medstead, Medway, and our own Medin'ham, Mednam, or Medmenham. It was the *'ham* or home of the Medings. The only apparent explanation of the *m* in the second syllable is that it was interpolated in the oral transmission of the name.

The end of any name is another indication of its origin. In the south of England the *hams* abound, associating such places with the homes of the West Saxons; but north and east of Watling Street, the great Roman road, and particularly in Lincolnshire, the *bys* predominate, linking up these early settlements with Scandinavian origins.

THE CHRISTIAN CONQUEST

The Saxon invasion of South Britain practically exterminated the Celtic Church wherever it extended, although a Church which has left so few visible marks of its presence and activities could never have been strong in numbers, influence, or wealth. The worship of the powers of Nature superseded whatever forms of religion prevailed in the invaded territory, and the names of the days of the English week are still left to show how completely the old order was swept away. This idolatry continued in the ascendant until the early part of the seventh century, when a movement began resulting in the conversion of the old Kingdom of Wessex, which included Dorset, Hampshire, Surrey, Oxfordshire, and Buckinghamshire.

The great Apostle of Wessex was Birinus, concerning whose origin nothing with any certainty has been ascertained. He is said to have been a Roman presbyter who presented himself to Pope Honorius, and solemnly promised before him "that he would scatter the seeds of the holy faith in those furthest inland territories of the English, which no teacher as yet had visited." Honorius thereupon sent him for episcopal consecration to Asterius, Bishop of Milan, who resided at Genoa. In the year 634 Birinus landed in Hampshire, where he soon found the Saxon people of Wessex so intensely heathen that it seemed unnecessary to go further afield. His persuasive energy quickly won converts on every hand. On Churn Knob, near Chilton, Berks, Birinus preached before Kynegils, King of Wessex, with such success that the King consented to become a Christian. The place selected for his baptism was Dorchester, where the Abbey Church of St. Peter and St. Paul soon rose on the spot that witnessed the conversion

of the dynasty which grew into the royal house of England. The immediate consequence of the royal baptism was the organisation of the West Saxon Church. From Dorchester up and down among the West Saxons Birinus went, from Dorset to Buckinghamshire, and from Surrey to the Severn, preaching, teaching, baptising, and, in the words of the Venerable Bede, " calling many people to the Lord by his pious labours," and " building and dedicating churches."

No single feature has survived of those missionary journeys, but it is reasonable to think that more than once Birinus passed through Medmenham, and there preached the name of Christ. The village would have been in the direct current of the new movement, for the waterways were the main avenues of communication, and the Saxon settlements were mostly clustered around the principal highways. The dedication of Medmenham Church to St. Peter and St. Paul connects it at once with the first foundation of Birinus at Dorchester. No doubt many of the churches of Berkshire and South Buckinghamshire, of which the early traces are lost in obscurity, owe their direct origin to the apostolic and persuasive enterprise of Birinus, the first Bishop of Wessex.

THE DIOCESE OF LINCOLN

After the death of Birinus in December 650 ecclesiastical complications arose, and the episcopal seat of Wessex was removed to Winchester. Then came the northern invasion of Wessex. In the year 661 Wulfhere, King of Mercia, laid waste the Berkshire country and penetrated as far as Southampton. According to the settlement which followed that border warfare, the southern conquests of Wulfhere were made over to Ethelwalch, King of the South Saxons, and the territory north of the Thames was added to Mercia. The city of Dorchester with

Lothere as Bishop then became the episcopal seat of a diocese which reached from Salisbury to Lichfield, and from the coast of Lincolnshire to the shores of Devon. About the year 1070, during the reconstruction following the Norman invasion, Lincoln superseded Dorchester as the diocesan seat of the Eastern Midlands, an enormous area extending from the Thames to the Humber. Buckinghamshire was a single Archdeaconry in this diocese, which at that time included the counties of Lincoln, Northampton, Rutland, Leicester, Cambridge, Huntingdon, Bedford, Buckingham, Oxford, and Hertford.

THE SHIRE OF BUCKINGHAM

The Saxon *tun* of Buckingham, which gave its name to the surrounding shire, was a settlement of the Bucking family. Such words themselves are links which bind the present to the remotest past, because they look back into the social conditions of the country, when all that has made England great and glorious was first being shaped. The word *shire* is connected with share (A.S. *scir*). When a Saxon King created an Earl, it was not merely a title of distinction. In a military age the honour was associated with territorial jurisdiction; therefore to the Earl was assigned a share, or shire, of the kingdom, which gave him his title, and in which he was delegated to govern. But at the Conquest the Saxon was replaced by the Norman, the Earl by the Count, and in the same change the shire became the county. The new title was borrowed by the Normans from the later Roman Empire. Since then, by the unaccountable fortune of words, a strange result has arisen. The name Count has disappeared altogether from the titles of English nobility, while Earl has recovered its place, but by a singular survival the wife of an Earl remains a Countess.

THE HUNDRED OF DESBOROUGH

The hundred of Desborough, of which Medmenham is a part, comprises the south-western portion of Buckinghamshire, and was anciently called Dustenberg and Dustenburgh. The name of the hundred is derived from an isolated place in the parish of West Wycombe, situated about a mile east of Wycombe, a little distance from the London Road on the right hand. Its remains may still be observed on the hill called Desborough Castle, but beyond earthworks no trace remains of the fortifications.

THE DANISH INVASION

About the year 800 another tide of overseas invasion began. The Danes swept up the Thames in repeated attacks during the reign of Egbert (802–839) and Ethelwulf (839–858). Mercia in 870 acknowledged the Danish overlordship, but Wessex still held out. After stubborn fighting at Reading and Ashdown, in Berkshire, the forces of Wessex were driven back, and King Ethelred died in the defence of his kingdom in 871. The earthworks at Danesfield have been popularly identified with this occupation, but the Danes were plunderers rather than settlers. At the same time it is not outside the range of probability that the entrenchments of Danesfield may then have become a base camp of the Danish overlords, keeping open their line of possible retreat to the sea.

The Peace of Wedmore in 878, between the Danes and Alfred King of Wessex, restored Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire to Wessex, but the withdrawal of the enemy was merely a prelude to a stronger attack. For more than a century after the death of Alfred the torrent of invasion continued, until in 1016 England was united under Canute, a Danish king.

THE ANCIENT MANORS OF WESSEX

The ravages and long unrest of the Danish wars drove the free farmer to seek protection from an overlord, and gave rise to a system of land tenure by military service. A leader capable of enforcing obedience to authority, and able to resist the raids of the enemy, became in course of time a territorial aristocrat. He preserved peace within his borders, and according to the extent of his estates he also contributed to the maintenance of a provincial army. Under King Alfred (871–901) all landed property was apportioned into military fees, by which every five-hide unit was expected in wartime to provide one warrior. A convincing confirmation of this still exists in the ancient manors of Wessex, most of which will be found to be multiples of the five-hide unit. Thus Hambleden was taxed at twenty hides ; Great Marlow at fifteen hides ; Fawley, Fingest, Hughenden, Medmenham, and Wycombe were each ten hides ; while Bix, Harpsden, and Little Marlow were five hides.

With the reign of Canute the Dane (1016–35) began a new period of industry and good government. This process of transition produced Godwin, the first English statesman who was neither king nor priest. By sheer ability he rose from obscure birth to be Earl of Wessex and Viceroy of England. His considerable personal possessions included many Buckinghamshire lands. After the death of Earl Godwin, his children held very large estates in Buckinghamshire. Some of them may have been Crown lands which formed part of their earldoms, but others were personal property inherited from Earl Godwin, or from Beorn, Earl of the Middle Angles and of Buckinghamshire, the murdered nephew of Earl Godwin. In this immediate neighbourhood Hedsor was the portion of

Earl Harold ; Fawley belonged to Earl Tosti ; and Chesham, Wycombe, Hughenden, and Bockmer were part of the dowry of their sister Edith, wife of Edward the Confessor. Brictric, who held Bockmer and other possessions at the time of the Norman Conquest, rendered military service for these lands to Queen Edith. Wlstan, a thane of Edward the Confessor, who in the reign of that monarch had the manor of Medmenham, was also a person of material substance, for in the time of the Confessor he had bestowed a large part of the manor of Denham upon Westminster Abbey.

The political changes which united the English kingdoms under the rule of the Dane and the Norman broke up the solid foundations of the old social order. The English aristocracy sank into a new middle class, as they were pushed from their places by the conquerors from overseas. Yet this was the means by which provincial differences were crushed into national unity, and it was in this process that a corporate life began to develop in the towns and villages of England.

CHAPTER II

THE MANOR OF MEDMENHAM

" The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour :
The paths of glory lead but to the grave."

Elegy written in a Country Churchyard

THOMAS GRAY (1716–71)

CHAPTER II

THE MANOR OF MEDMENHAM

WHEN the Domesday Survey was taken there were eighteen hundreds in Buckinghamshire. Each hundred is supposed to have been originally a group or settlement of one hundred free families of Saxon invaders. If this were so, it would explain very simply the strange disproportion between the area of the hundred in the south and east of England, and the same division in the west and north. The Saxon population would have been much denser in places most accessible from the east and south coasts. In Kent and Sussex, as well as in Buckinghamshire, the hundreds average 24 square miles, but in Lancashire they are over 300 square miles. The hundred of Desborough, with Medmenham at the extreme south, is just $23\frac{1}{2}$ square miles.

DOMESDAY BOOK

Many of these settlements were burdened with their own special customs, and it was to ascertain and record these that William the Conqueror sent into each county the commissioners whose findings are recorded in Domesday Book. The title of this book, which was completed in 1086, connects itself at once with the plain idea of its purpose. It was a Book of Judgment, to serve as a register of the possessions of all freemen, to ascertain what military service was owed by the King's chief tenants, to affix the homage due to him, and to record by what tenure the various estates were held. The original book is in the Rolls Chapel, Chancery Lane, London, but facsimiles can be referred to in many public libraries. A jury

declared on oath the nature and extent of every estate, the numbers and conditions of its inhabitants, the customs due from the estate to the Crown, and the value of the property before and after the Conquest.

The account given below of the lordships of Medmenham and Broch appears in Domesday Book, according to the jury empanelled in the hundred of Desborough. While the Bolebec family was in possession of the property the lordships were consolidated, and since their day Bockmer or Broch has never been regarded as a separate estate.

It will be observed that Medmenham was assessed at ten hides, and Broch at one hide. The hide of land was composed of four virgates, and each virgate represented a number of Domesday acres, which varied in different localities. Taking the virgate at the normal area of 30 acres, Medmenham consisted of 1320 Domesday acres. The imperial acre is not much more than half the ancient measure. In modern terms the parish of Medmenham extends to 2442 acres. The number of carucates indicates the extent of land in cultivation, each carucate being the amount of land such as one team of eight oxen could plough in one season.

The Land of Hugh de Bolebech,
In Dustenburg Hundred.

Hugh [de Bolebec] himself holds Medemeham, and it is taxed for ten hides. There is land for ten ploughs ; in the demesne are four hides ; and there are two ploughs there ; and ten villeins with eight bordars have eight ploughs. There are four serfs. From a fishery there are 1000 eels. Pasture is there for all the plough teams, wood for 50 hogs. In all it is, and was, worth 100 shillings. In the reign of the Confessor, eight pounds. Wlstan, a thane of King Edward, held this manor, and could sell it to whom he pleased.

The same Hugh holds Broch for one hide. There is land for one plough and it is there, with a villein and two bordars. It is, and was always, worth ten shillings. Odo, a man of Brictric's, held this land and could sell it.

Domesday Book, Rec. Com., vol. i., 150*b*.

BOLEBEC CASTLE

Standing before the high altar at Westminster Abbey the Conqueror had promised with an oath that he would rule the whole people with righteousness and royal providence, therefore those willing to acknowledge him as king were to be given the chance of retaining what was their own, redeeming their lands either by paying a ransom or giving hostages for the debt. There was at first no wholesale process of land confiscation, but it ultimately happened that only a small proportion of the Saxon owners remained in absolute possession of their estates. We may reasonably presume, as the manors of Medmenham and Bockmer were at an early date appropriated to the Crown and redistributed, that their Saxon proprietors were numbered in the ranks of the rebels.

THE LORDSHIP HOUSE

There can be no doubt that the Lordship House of Medmenham stood on the brow of the hill overlooking the Saxon settlement, within the entrenchments formed there by a prehistoric people. The dwelling still known as States, adjacent to the above site, was the home farm of the lordship. Beech trees have overgrown the dismantled castle ramparts, and pavements which once resounded to the tramp of armed sentinels are now silent forest glades, but traces of military occupation have at times been discovered. These evidences have the witness of tradition, as well as the support of probability, and tradition also asserts that Hugh de Bolebec or his immediate successors rebuilt the Lordship House of Wlstan the thane, so that it became known thenceforth as Bolebec Castle.

THE NORMAN MANOR

One effect of the Norman occupation was the change of phraseology introduced by the invaders.

The Saxon settlement became the Norman village, so that documents thereafter refer to the " vill " of Medmenham, and the English lordship developed into the Norman manor. The word " manor " denoted more particularly the dwelling (Fr. *manoir*) or mansion house, where the customs of the community were administered by or on behalf of the feudal baron ; but because the manor was the administrative centre the name soon became identified with the territorial limits within which the authority of the lord was exercised, and stood primarily for his rights of jurisdiction.

BOLEBEC FAMILY

Sieur Hugh de Bolebec, upon whom the manors of Medmenham and Bockmer were bestowed, was probably a cousin to the Norman Duke. He shared largely in the lands of the deprived Saxons, being the possessor of thirteen lordships, of which ten were in the county of Buckingham. His kinsman Walter Giffard, created Earl of Buckingham by the Conqueror, was one of the assessors of the great survey registered in Domesday Book. The family designation was derived from the town of Bolebec, in the department of Seine Inférieure, Normandy. It is prettily situated on the slope of a hill, above a narrow stream called the Bolebec, at the junction of four valleys. The Bolebecs of Buckinghamshire have often been confounded with the Northumberland family of the same name. Each of the branches held knights' fees representing a barony, but the Buckinghamshire line were never created " barons " in the modern sense of the word.

Hugh de Bolebec I was succeeded in the Buckinghamshire barony by Walter de Bolebec I, probably his son, who gave land to Ramsey Abbey, and was in turn succeeded by his son, Hugh de Bolebec II, a man of might and wealth (*potens et magnarum rerum*). During the religious revival of the twelfth century,

THE BOLEBECS OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE *

ARMS: Vert a lion rampant arg. vulned in the shoulder.

[a Dane]

Osborn de Bolebec = Aveline.

Gunnora = Richard the Fearless, Duke of Normandy, *d.* 996.

Walter Giffard, Lord of Longueville, came to England, 1066.

Richard the Good, Duke of Normandy, *d.* 1026.

Emma, Lady of the English.

Edward the Confessor.

HUGH DE BOLEBEC I of Bolbec in Normandy; held the barony of Bolebec in Bucks., of Walter, Earl of Buckingham, probably a relative, *fl.* 1086.

Walter Giffard, Earl of Buckingham, Justiciar of England, *c.* 1085.

Earls of Buckingham.

Richard, Duke of Normandy.

Robert the Devil, Duke of Normandy.

William I of England.

Norman Kings of England.

WALTER DE BOLEBEC I = Heilewis. *t.* Hen. I.

HUGH DE BOLEBEC II founded Woburn Abbey, 1145; went to Holy Land; visited Pope Alexander III *c.* 1159; took the habit of a Cistercian and died at Medmenham (1164–5).

=

Walter de Bolebec II, guardian of his nephew, whose legitimacy he disputed; *d.* 1176. = Margaret (surviving 1206).

WALTER DE BOLEBEC III, a minor in 1165; dead by 1185. = EGHELYN, DAU. OF REGINALD DE COURTENAY (who had the custody of Whitchurch Bolebec, founded the house of Courtenay, Earls of Devon, and drove the monks of Woburn from Medmenham). She remarried Gilbert Basset of Headington, who had Swaffham Bulbeck and Medmenham with her in dower, 1185.

Constance, *m.* Elias Beauchamp, coheir to her niece.

Aubrey (de Vere), 1st Earl of Oxford, Great Chamberlain.

Isabel de Bolebec I, born about 1175; *m.* 1190; dead, *s.p.* 1207.

Aubrey (de Vere) 2nd Earl of Oxford; paid scutage for the Bolebec fief, 1191; *re-m.* Adelizia, dau. of Roger Bigod, Earl of Norfolk; *d.s.p.* 1214.

Robert de Vere, 3rd Earl of Oxford (1170–1221) = ISABEL II, *aunt and coheir to her niece*; *re-m.* Henry de Novant; *d.* 1245.

HUGH DE VERE, 4th Earl of Oxford, Lord Bolebec.

EARLS OF OXFORD AND WARENNE. (*See* Table No. II.)

* Based upon J. H. Round, Introduction to *Rotuli de Dominabus*; Curia Regis Rolls, 92 *m.* 2; 04 *m.* 10*d.*; and documents cited in the text. Names in SMALL CAPITALS denote lords of Medmenham Manor.

Table No. I.

this Hugh founded the Cistercian Abbey of Woburn in 1145, and afterwards bestowed upon it certain lands in Medmenham to maintain a cell. Hugh de Bolebec II ended his days as a monk in the cloisters of Medmenham Abbey. After his decease, which happened about 1165, his brother, Walter de Bolebec II, secured the custody of the barony and the wardship of the heir, Walter de Bolebec III, whose legitimacy he disputed. Walter the nephew married Eghelyn, daughter of Reginald de Courtenay, who was a coming man and founder of the great house of Courtenay, afterwards Earls of Devon. Upon the decease of Walter de Bolebec II, the wardship of the younger Walter was in 1176 obtained by Reginald de Courtenay, who drove out from Medmenham the monks of Woburn. By the year 1185 Walter de Bolebec III was dead, because the manor of Medmenham had then become the dower of his widow Eghelyn de Courtenay, who took that year another husband, Sir Gilbert Bassett. In her latter days Eghelyn was seized with remorse because her father had robbed the monks of Woburn; therefore in 1201 she restored to them the manor of Medmenham "with all things pertaining thereto and all the liberties which they had of the gift of Hugh de Bolebec."

DE VERE FAMILY

The only child of Walter de Bolebec III and Eghelyn was a daughter Isabel, whose wardship was obtained by Aubrey de Vere III, first Earl of Oxford and Baron de Vere, the grandson of Aubrey de Vere, a follower of the Conqueror into England. Aubrey de Vere III paid to King John in 1190 a fine of 500 marks for the wardship, and that his eldest son Aubrey de Vere IV might have Isabel to wife. This son paid scutage in 1191 for the Bolebec fief, but Isabel died young, and her husband remarried

Adelizia, a daughter of Roger Bigod, second Earl of Norfolk. His younger brother, Robert de Vere, who afterwards succeeded to the earldom of Oxford, had meantime given to King John 200 marks and 3 palfreys for leave to marry Isabel de Bolebec II, aunt and one of the coheirs to Isabel, Countess of Oxford. She hesitated a while, paying 300 marks and 3 palfreys that she might not be compelled to marry, and she collected the money from her dutiful underlings.

> Ysabell de Bolebec has letters of the King addressed to the sheriff of Buckinghamshire to have her reasonable aid from her free tenants to acquit her fine of 300 marks and 3 palfreys. She also has letters touching her knights to wit for a scutage of 2 marks and likewise to other sheriffs.
>
> *Rot. Litt. Claus.*, Rec. Com., 1204–24, Feb. 1207, p. 77.

Very soon afterwards she decided to accept her ardent lover. Isabel survived her husband, who must have been considerably her junior, and after his death on October 25, 1221, she became the wife of Henry de Novant.

When the Bolebec barony came into possession of Isabel de Bolebec II, she disputed the benefaction to the monks of Woburn on the ground that Eghelyn de Courtenay had no right to dispose of the manor of Medmenham in perpetuity. After proceedings lasting ten years, assize was sought, when the jurors gave an inconclusive verdict, but judgment was deferred by Stephen de Segrave, pending the coming of the King. A compromise was finally agreed upon between the rival claimants by which the Abbot of Woburn acknowledged the whole manor of Medmenham was the right of Isabel, and Isabel granted to the Abbot one carucate of land in Medmenham, representing only a small fraction of the manor.

On the death of Robert, third Earl of Oxford, the

infant son of Isabel de Bolebec II became a ward of the Crown, an event of frequent occurrence when warfare was the principal pastime of the landed classes, and a military career their only profession. In such circumstances the profits of an estate during the minority went to the Crown, but the mother in this case secured permission to redeem them by making a money payment.

> Isabel de Bolebec who was wife of Robert de Ver formerly Earl of Oxford fined to have the custody of the land and heir of the same Earl and the son of the same Isabella until he was of age, paying one part of the fine and giving security for the rest. Mandate to sheriff of Buckinghamshire to deliver to Isabel full seisin of all the lands which Robert held, both of his own inheritance and of hers.—11th Nov. 1221.
>
> *Excerpta e Rot. Fin.*, Rec. Com., vol. i. p. 75.

A somewhat similar procedure operated on the death of Isabel in 1245, when her son Hugh de Vere, fourth Earl of Oxford, paid relief to the Crown on his succession to the barony of Bolebec, which had been held by his mother in her own right.

> King took homage of H. Earl of Oxford son and heir of Isabel de Bolebek formerly Countess of Oxford for all the lands which Isabel held of the King in chief. Mandate to sheriff of Buckinghamshire to take security from the Earl in £100 for his relief for all the lands of which Isabel was seised at her death.—14th Feb. 1245.
>
> *Excerpta e Rot. Fin.*, Rec. Com., vol. i. p. 430.

About two years after coming into possession of the barony of Bolebec the Earl purchased the right of Richard de Stonistrafford in about thirty acres of land at Medmenham.

> This is the final concord made in the Court of the lord King at Wycumb in the quindene of St. Martin in the year of the reign of King Henry son of King John the thirty-second. Before Roger de Thurkelby Gilbert de Preston Master Simon de Wauton and John de Cobbeham Justices Itinerant and

> others of the lord King's lieges then there present. Between Richard son of Hugh de Stonistrafford, petent, and Hugh de Veer Earl of Oxford, tenant of one virgate of land with the appurtenances in Medmeham. Whereof there was plea between them in the same court. To wit that the aforesaid Richard remised and quitclaimed from himself and his heirs to the aforesaid Earl and his heirs all the right and claim which he had in the aforesaid lands with the appurtenances for ever. And for this remission quitclaim fine and concord, the same Earl gave the aforesaid Richard 40 shillings sterling.
>
> *Feet of Fines* (Bucks), Case 15, File 28, No. 21.

Hugh de Vere, fourth Earl of Oxford, was hereditary Great Chamberlain of England, a crusader, the founder of Castle Hedingham Hospital, and the patron of five monastic establishments. This Hugh married Hawise, only daughter of Saher de Quincey, Earl of Winchester, and he died 1263, seised among other lands of the manor of Medmenham, leaving Robert de Vere his son and heir.

A careful examination of the inquisition made at the decease of landowners reflects very clearly the rise or fall of prosperity, the times of agricultural depression, the waves of industrial activity, the customs of the manor, and the comparative value of money. From the following statement, made on the death of the fourth Earl of Oxford, it will be gathered that the mill on the Thames was then in ruins, but a thriving business was being done at the water mill near the Castle. Another feature of interest is that arable land in 1263 was worth 5*d.* an acre. About one-third of the manor was then held in villeinage, i.e. by copyhold. The rest of the cultivated land, after counting out the Abbey estate, was farmed in the demesne by the reeve or bailiff.

> Extent of the Manor of Medmenham co. Buckingham made after the Nativity 48 Henry iij, (1263) by precept of the same lord King, upon the death of Hugh de Ver formerly earl of

Oxford before William de Axem(uth), in association with the escheator of the aforesaid earl, by the oath of the following, viz: William de Medmeham, William de Chesebeth, John de Wydemere, William de Wydemere, John le Fulur, John Mannaser, Osebert the carpenter, Nicholas son of Thomas, Richard le Butiler, Walter Garlond, Robert de la Rokholt and Richard de Spineuil who say that in the said manor there are in the demesne 280 acres of arable land, worth per acre 5*d*. And the sum is 116*s*. 8*d*. And there are there 48 acres of mowing ground, and they are extended at £4 16*s*. And there are there 30 acres of pasture and they are extended at . . . And the pasturage of sheep upon the demesne is extended at 4*s*. And there are there 120 acres of wood. And there is no (profit) from underwood nor herbage, but pannage is extended at 6*s*. 8*d*. And there is there a fishery (which) is extended at 13*s*. 4*d*., and a court with a garden and curtilage is extended at 20*s*., and (there is there one) water mill now ruined (*debile*) which is not extended at more than 2*s*. And there is there one fulling mill (which) is extended at 50*s*., and rent of free tenants is extended at 42*s*. 5½*d*. And the customary dues except rents of assize are extended at 5*s*. 3*d*. And there are there in villeinage 13½ virgates of land, of which the rent extends at 41*s*. 10*d*. And the works and customary services are extended at 71*s*. And geese, capons and hens are extended at 3*s*. 3½*d*. And pleas and perquisites of court are extended at 6*s*. 8*d*. And they say that the villeins may be taxed at the will of the lord. And they say that the abbot of Medmeham has the church of the manor to his own use. And they say that the earl held the said manor of the king in chief, and it is of the honour of Bolebek. Also they say that Robert de Ver is son and next heir of the said earl and is aged 23½ years.

In witness whereof being first sworn they have set their seals to this present writing.

Chancery Inquisition post mortem, Henry iij, File 31, No. 1.

The deceased Earl had taken part against the Crown in 1258 by subscribing to the Provisions of Oxford, which created a Royal Council for the reformation of the State, in which movement the leading spirit was Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, a close friend of the Bishop of Lincoln, and patron of the Friars. For seven years England was in the throes of a Barons' war. At one time Earl Simon was

completely victorious, but the defection of influential supporters with the young Earl of Gloucester quickly changed the situation. The Provisions of Oxford were annulled. The battle of Evesham, August 4, 1265, in which Earl Simon was killed, left Henry III master of the position.

These national events found their local counterpart in the following proceedings. Robert Earl of Oxford was taken prisoner just before the battle of Evesham, and the manor of Medmenham was seized by the bailiff of the Earl of Gloucester, who was then lord of the neighbouring manors of Hambleden and Great Marlow, but was for the time fighting on the side of the King.

> Hundred of Dusteburgh.
>
> Inquisition made by 12 lawful men, to wit Thomas Taillard, William de la Lude, John de Croyden, William de Medmeham, William de Falle, Henry Symeon, William Poingrant, William de Aysrigge, William de Wydindon, John de Cleueden, Geoffrey de Huchenden, and Henry de Chaluelegh, who say that the manor of Medmeham, which was held by the earl of Oxford, an opponent of the king, was seized by the bailiff of the earl of Gloucester. And the extent of the said manor (is) of arable land 220 acres at 6*d.* per acre, of meadow 42 acres at 16*d.* per acre, of wood 120 acres profit of the same wood being ½ mark. The customary services of the manor are worth yearly 50*s.* 5*d.* The profits of court and garden are worth yearly 8*s.* A mill upon the Thames is worth yearly 2*s.* The yearly rents (are) £10 19*s.* 6½*d.* And be it known that Walter the Reeve and John the Forester of Medmeham received the rent for Michaelmas term, to wit, £4 17*s.* 10½*d.* Sum £30 4*s.* 7½*d.*
>
> *Chancery Inquisition Miscell.*, File 19, No. 21.

The Earl of Oxford was afterwards restored to this and all his estates upon payment of a fine by the *dictum* of Kenilworth. One remarkable event in his career was his child-marriage, a thing far more common in those days than we are generally aware. At twelve years or less he married Alice, daughter

and coheir of Gilbert de Samford. She was no doubt much about the same age, for she survived her husband sixty-five years, and died a widow in 1317.

THE WARREN OF MEDMENHAM

The policy of Edward I was to consolidate the principles of the Constitution into a practical system. He was not a creative genius, but he possessed the faculty of organisation, and he had been endowed with a legal mind. These instincts may be observed throughout his career, and particularly in an inquisition which took place early in his reign touching the rights and liberties withdrawn from the King in Buckinghamshire. Among the treasured assets of the King was the right of appropriating land for rabbit-warrens. There were no rabbits in the England of Anglo-Saxon times. They were introduced by the Normans, probably from Spain. In those days the breeding of rabbits to provide fur skins for clothing was a valuable industry, and the privilege of using land for that purpose could only be exercised by licence of the Crown. This right in the manor of Medmenham appears to have been granted at some earlier time to the Earl of Oxford and his successors, for in the above proceedings the following passage occurs :

> 4 Edw: I (1275–6).
> [The jurors return that] the Earl of Oxford has free warren at Medinham but by what warrant they do not know.
> *Rotuli Hundredorum*, Rec. Com.

DE WARENNE FAMILY

In the year 1284 the manor of Medmenham, which was then held of the King in chief as the fee of one knight by Robert II, fifth Earl of Oxford, was

granted by him as a marriage portion for his daughter Joan.

30 September, 12 Edw. I (1284).
Grant by Robert de Ver, earl of Oxford, to William de Warenne, eldest son of John earl Warenne, and to Joan, earl Robert's eldest daughter, of the manor of Medmenham and lands in Cestresham (specified). To hold of the king in chief, to William and Joan in survivorship and to the heirs of their joint bodies ; remainder to earl Robert and his heirs. Warranty against the heirs of earl Robert. Witness :—lord Gilbert de Clar' earl of Gloucester and Hertford, lord William de Valence, lord Penbrok, lord Roger Bigod earl of Norfolk, marshal of England, Sir William Bardolf, Sir Reginald de Argenteym, Sir Anselm de Gyse, Sir Richard de Suthchurch, Sir Richard de la Vach, Sir John de Beuchaump, Sir Saer de Hontingfeud, Sir Henry de Lacy, Sir William Graundin, Sir John Carbonel, Sir John de Haueresham, Sir Oliver Morel, Sir Robert de Aythorp, Sir John de Cheyney, Sir Hugh de Broke, Sir William de Pakeham, Sir Robert Baynard, Robert de Ver, Hugh de Ver, Sir Roger de Bachswourth, Roger de Southcote, Gilbert de Wyk and others. Dated on the morrow of St. Michael, 12 Edw. I.

Ancient Deeds (P.R.O.), A. 13.

An incident connected with the above John Earl Warenne may here be recounted as heralding far-reaching political changes. The government of England, which had hitherto been a form of royal despotism, was giving place to legislation by the Great Council of the realm, but the difficult problem was to exercise discipline among the greater barons. Edward I attempted to do this by issuing in 1278 writs of *quo warranto* requiring every noble to produce evidence of title to the possessions he held from the Crown. The Earl Warenne attended the examination, and during the proceedings he unsheathed a rusty sword, which he flung upon the commissioners' table with these words : " This, sirs, is my title-deed. By this sword my fathers won their lands when they came over with the Conqueror, and by my sword I will hold them."

DE VERE, DE WARENNE, AND FITZALAN*

ARMS: (De Vere)—Quarterly, gu. and or; in the 1st quarter a mullet arg. Crest: a boar passant az., bristled and hoofed or. Motto: "Vero nil verius."
(De Warenne)—Checkered or and az.
(FitzAlan)—Gu., a lion rampant or.

HUGH (DE VERE), LORD BOLEBEC, 4TH EARL OF OXFORD, son and heir of Isabel de Bolebec II; bur. 1263 at Colne Priory. = Hawise, dau. of Saher (de Quincy), Earl of Winchester.

John (de Warenne), Earl of Surrey; *d.* 1305.

ROBERT (DE VERE), LORD BOLEBEC, 5TH EARL OF OXFORD (1240–1296); had custody of his grandson John, Earl of Surrey, 1293. = Alice, dau. of Gilbert de Samford; *d.* 1317.

WILLIAM (DE WARENNE), eldest son and heir; killed at Croydon, 1285. = JOAN, eldest dau.; *d.* 1293.

Robert (de Vere), 6th Earl of Oxford; *d.s.p.* 1331.

Sir Alphonso (de Vere).
†
(Earls of Oxford, styling themselves "Barons," later "Viscounts" Bulbeck.)

1305
Alice = Edmund (FitzAlan), Earl of Arundel, beheaded 1326.

JOHN (DE WARENNE), EARL OF SURREY (1286–1347), *d.s.p. legit.* = Joanna, dau. of Henry III, Count of Bar, by Eleanor (Plantagenet), dau. of Edward I; *d.* 1351.

Sir Hugh le Despenser the Younger, hanged 1326.

1321
RICHARD (FITZALAN), EARL OF ARUNDEL AND SURREY (1313–1376). = Isabel; marriage annulled 1344.

†
(Children, disinherited in 1344.)

1344
= Eleanor, dau. of Henry, Earl of Lancaster.

RICHARD (FITZALAN), EARL OF ARUNDEL AND SURREY; one of the Lords Appellant; beheaded in Cheapside 1397.
†
(*See* Table III.)

Sir Edward le Despenser
Edward, Lord le Despenser
THOMAS, LORD LE DESPENSER, EARL OF GLOUCESTER; beheaded 1399.

* Based upon G.E.C. *Complete Peerage*, and documents cited in the text. Names in SMALL CAPITALS denote lords of Medmenham Manor.

Table No. II.

DANESFIELD

(A view of the south-west frontage, looking from the rose garden)

"ALTHOUGH it is a creation of the twentieth century, Danesfield still has its links with mystery and romance. . . . It was the home of primitive man, the haunt of Danish adventurers, the prison of Saxon hostages, and without doubt a place of hot encounters and sieges" (*see* p. 152).

To face p. 34.

WILLIAM DE WARENNE

In the year following the marriage of William de Warenne, his expectation of life was shortened by accident as by warfare, for a pledge was obtained from the King that in the event of William's decease the guardianship of any heir during minority should pass, not to the Crown, but to the Earl and Countess of Oxford.

> Westminster, 10 June 1285.
> Promise to Robert de Veer, earl of Oxford and Alice his wife, who, with the king's licence have granted to William de Warenna, the King's kinsman, Joan his wife, and the heirs of the said Joan, the manors of Medineham, Tybourne, Pritelwell, Wlfhamston, Nuchamsted, Cynges, and £10 in land in the manor of Cestresham, all held in chief, as by the charter more fully appears, that, in case the said William and Joan die leaving an heir within age, the custody of the land and heir shall accrue to the said earl and his wife.
>
> *Calendar of Patent Rolls*, 1281–92, p. 173.

Within a year of this warrant William de Warenne was killed in a tournament at Croydon. John de Warenne, next heir to the earldom, was not born until after his father's death; but there was an elder daughter, Alice de Warenne, in whose line Medmenham manor descended after the decease of her brother in 1347 without issue.

> Extent of the manor which was of Lord William de Warenn' at Medmenham co. Bucks made Wednesday before SS. Fabian and Sebastian 15 Edward I (15 Jan. 1286–7) by John de Chisseneck of Hameldon, Ralph de Medmenham, John de Wydemere of the same, William de Wydemere of the same, William le Folour of Medmenham, Hugh de la Hulle of Hameldon, Reginald du Frith of the same, William le Botiler of the same, Thomas Couer of Hameld, Thomas de Bokemere of Medenmenham and William Ossebern of the same who say that the manor aforesaid is held of the earl of Oxford by the service of the fee of one knight and it is of the free marriage of lady Joan his wife who still survives.
> And they say that the capital messuage with the whole enclosure is worth by the year 2*s*. saving aid.

And there are there in demesne 150 acres of arable land and it is worth every acre 4*d*. sum 50*s*. And there are there 16 acres of meadow and it is worth every acre yearly 18*d*. sum 24*s*. And there are there 16 acres of several pasture and it is worth every acre yearly 8*d*. sum 10*s*. 8*d*. And there are there rents of assize as well free as customary £10 0*s*. 10*d*. at the feast of St. Michael and at the feast of the Annunciation by equal portions. And works and customary service are worth by the year 6*s*. 8*d*. And there are there 40 acres of wood of which the profit saving distraint is worth nothing because it is common pasture. Pleas and perquisites of court are worth by the year 10*s*.

Also they say that John the son of lord William of Warenn' is his next heir, and was aged ½ a year at Christmas in the aforesaid year.

Chancery Inquisition post mortem, Edw. I, File 47, No. 13.

On the death of William de Warenne in December 1285, the property was seized by Henry de Bray, escheator south of the Trent, in accordance with the custom by which the infant heir of a tenant in chief became a ward of the Crown. The above inquisition subsequently taken proved that the manor of Medmenham was the free estate of William's widow Joan ; also that other property was hers by purchase or by personal investiture, with the result that Joan's estates were restored upon her " taking oath not to marry without the King's licence."

Westminster 10 May 1287.

To Master Henry de Bray, escheator this side Trent. Order to restore to Joan late the wife of William de Warenna tenant in chief, the manors of Medmenham, Pritelwell, Crawmershe, and Beston, together with everything received thence since they were taken into the king's hands upon her taking oath not to marry without the king's licence, as the king learns by inquisitions taken by the escheator that the manor of Medmenham, co. Buckingham, which William and Joan held on the day of William's death, is of her own free marriage, and that the manor of Pritelwell, which William and Joan likewise held, is of Joan's purchase, and that William and Joan were jointly

enfeoffed of the manor of Crawmershe, co. Oxford, and of the manor of Beston co. Norfolk, by Robert de Veer, earl of Oxford, Joan's father, and that William and Joan were in full seisin thereof, until the day of William's death.

Cal. Close Rolls, 1279–88, p. 449.

The death of Joan de Warenne in 1293, during the minority of her son, raised once more the question of feudal tenure. It was then reaffirmed that the custody of the land and heir of William de Warenne and Joan his wife was vested by their decease in Robert de Vere, Earl of Oxford, and Alice his wife. At the same time Malcolm de Harleye, " escheator this side Trent," was ordered not to intermeddle further in the matter.

Westminster 29 November 1293.
To Malcolm de Harleye escheator this side Trent. Order not to intermeddle further with the custody of the land and heir of William de Warenna and Joan, his wife, and to render to Robert de Veer, earl of Oxford, and Alice, his wife, anything that he may have received thence since the death of Joan, as Robert and Alice granted to William and Joan by the king's licence the manors of Midmeham, Tyburne, Pritelwelle, Wlfhamstone, Nuthemstede, Cynges, and £10 yearly of land in the manor of Cestresham, which manors and lands are held of the king in chief, to have and to hold to William and Joan and to Joan's heirs, as is contained in the charter made between Robert and Alice and William and Joan, and the king granted that if William and Joan died without an heir begotten between them, he would save Robert and Alice harmless as to the custody of the land and heir of William and Joan during the life of Robert and Alice, and William and Joan are now dead.

Cal. Close Rolls, 1288–96, p. 335–6.

One of the early actions of Parliament, when that body was finally established by Edward I, was the Statute of Mortmain, 1279, forbidding the transfer of land to the Church in such a way that any estate should cease to render service to the King. Some few years later there was an examination of the terms

of feudal tenure, taken for financial purposes because of certain revisions in Exchequer procedure.

> The Hundred of Desburue.
> The earl of Oxford holds the vill of Medmenham for the fee of one knight, from the king in chief.
> *Misc. Book*, Exch. K.R., vol. 17 (1284–1286).

Nearly twenty years later a similar scrutiny took place in somewhat different circumstances. The marriage of the eldest daughter of Edward I was about to take place, and a feudal aid was being collected from the king's tenants in chief to provide her marriage dowry. In this process feudal estates were examined to ascertain their assessable value.

> The Hundred of Dusteborwe.
> The earl of Oxford holds the vill of Medmenham of the demise of the king unto the lawful age of John son of William de Warenne, and it is of the barony of the said earl of Oxford, but by what quantity of fees they do not know.
> *Subsidy Rolls*, Exch. K.R., 242, No. 114, 1302–1303.

John de Warenne II, at that time a minor, married Joanna, granddaughter of Edward I. Certain writers state that this John died at Medmenham, but the idea has no support beyond the ambiguous wording of the *Inquisition* taken after his decease. Six days before his death, the same Earl of Surrey made his will in Yorkshire, presumably upon his deathbed, and it would have been almost impossible for him in these circumstances to have made the journey across England. He died 30th June 1347, most probably in Yorkshire, and was no doubt buried somewhere in that neighbourhood. A careful study of the customary *Inquisition* is instructive. Arable land, which in 1265 had been assessed at 6*d.* an acre, was valued in 1347 at 3*d.*; meadow land and rough pasture had depreciated 25 per cent.; the woods had become wasted; the duties

of the manor had dwindled to less than half their former amount ; and the castle remained in a state of neglect.

Some part of this depreciation was due to a gathering wave of agricultural depression, which issued in the Peasant Revolt of the fourteenth century, but the personal circumstances of the Earl of Surrey made matters more desperate in this neighbourhood. He probably cared nothing what happened to his estates so far as posterity was concerned, therefore he just allowed them to go to ruin. His marriage had been most unhappy. He had no legitimate heirs, and his attempts to settle lands on certain illegitimate children failed through their early decease.

Writ dated at Reading 2 July, 21 Edw. III (1347).
Inquisition taken at Medmenham Saturday in the feast of the Translation of St. Thomas the Martyr, 21 Edw. III (7 July 1347) before William Croyser escheator etc. by force of a writ to enquire how much John de Warenna late earl of Surrey who held of the king in chief, held of the king in chief the day on which he died, as well in demesne as in service, in the bailiwick of the escheator and how much of others and by what service etc., by John Spyneuill, Roger atte Rokholte, Roger le Warener, William atte Dene, Thomas Harleford, Richard de London, Adam le Foulere, Geoffrey atte Haldheye, Hugh atte Stompe, John le Smyth of Merlawe, Thomas Dauy and Geoffrey Frisel, who say on their oath that John de Warenna late earl of Surrey held of the lord king in chief on the day on which he died, at Medmenham in his demesne as of fee, the manor of Medmenham of the king in chief by petty serjeanty rendering therefor to the same lord king yearly for suit and ward at two yearly terms by the hand of the sheriff for the time being, to wit, at the feasts of the nativity of St. John the Baptist and of St. Martin 6*s*. by equal portions.
And there is in the same manor one capital messuage with gardens which is worth by the year 3*s*. 4*d*. Also 140 acres of arable land which are worth by the year 35*s*. at 3*d*. per acre. Also 20 acres of meadow which are worth by the year 60*s*. at 3*s*. per acre. Also 20 acres of pasture which are worth by the year 20*s*. at 12*d*. per acre. Also 60 acres of waste wood which on account of decay cannot be extended nor appraised

because that wood was entirely wasted by the aforesaid earl during the time when he was alive. Also £9 of rent of assize as well of free tenants as of bond at two yearly terms by equal portions, to wit, at the feasts of the Annunciation of the Blessed Mary and St. Michael. Also works and customary services of the aforesaid bondmen let to farm yearly at the same terms by equal portions are worth 20*s*. Also the pleas and perquisites of court are worth yearly there 6*s*. 8*d*.

And the aforesaid John de Warenna died on Saturday next after the feast of the Apostles Peter and Paul 21 Edward III (30 June 1347). And Richard earl of Arundel is his next heir and is aged 30 years and more. And they say that the earl held no more lands nor tenements in the said bailiwick the day on which he died, so far as they have been able to find out.

Chancery Inquisition post mortem, Edw. III, File 86, No. 19.

The same John de Warenne II possessed a whole portmanteau of dignities. He was Earl of Surrey, Sussex, and Warenne, and Earl Palatine, Baron of Lewes, Reigate, Conigsburgh, Grantham, Stamford, Browfield, and Yale ; also Earl of Strathearn in Scotland ; in addition to which he filled a number of the higher military commands in England.

FITZALAN FAMILY

Alice de Warenne, sister of the above John, married in 1305 Edmund FitzAlan, Earl of Arundel, by whom she had a son Richard, born about 1313. At the age of seven or eight Richard was married (9th February 1321), in the King's Chapel at Havering atte Bower, to a child-bride Isabel, daughter of Sir Hugh le Despenser, the unpopular favourite of a worthless king. The deposition of Edward II made havoc of the FitzAlan fortunes. Edmund Earl of Arundel was deprived of his dignities and beheaded 17th November 1326, and Sir Hugh le Despenser was summarily hanged on a gibbet 20 feet high. The title of Earl of Arundel was restored 12th December 1331 to Richard FitzAlan, son of Edmund and Alice, and nine years later he was made Admiral of the West.

In the year 1344 he obtained from Clement VI an annulment of his youthful marriage, but he really sought a divorce so as to wed Eleanor, daughter of Henry Earl of Lancaster, with whom he was already living. She was cousin to his first wife. This annulment had the effect of disinheriting the children of Isabel le Despenser, but in order to ensure the descent of his estates to the offspring of his second marriage, Richard FitzAlan surrendered them in 1345 to trustees and received them back again. The deeds of surrender included the manor of Medmenham, which was part of his mother's dowry; but he did not enter into possession of it until after the decease of his uncle John de Warenne II in 1347, at which time Richard was over thirty years of age.

Sandwich, 24 June 1345.

Whereas Richard, earl of Arundel, has granted to the king and his heirs the reversion of the castle, town and manor of Castellacre and the manor of Buston co. Norfolk, and the manors of Tibourne co. Middlesex and Medmenham co. Buckingham with the appurtenances which John de Warenne, earl of Surrey, holds for the term of his life of the inheritance of the earl of Arundel and which after the death of the earl of Surrey ought to revert to the earl of Arundel and his heirs; now the king, wishing to confer a special favour upon the earl, in this respect, has granted the premises, after the death of the earl of Surrey, to the earl of Arundel for his life, and after his death to William de Clynton, earl of Huntingdon, Maurice de Berkele, Edward de Sancto Johanne le Neueu and John de Alresford and their heirs.

Patent Roll, No. 213, m.l.

Arundel on Saturday after SS. Peter and Paul,
19 Edw. III (2 July 1345).

Release by Maurice de Berkele and Edward de Sancto Johanne le neveu to Richard, earl of Arundel, of all their right and claim in premises (specified) in cos. Sussex, Surrey, Chester, Oxford, Buckingham, Norfolk, Wilts, Essex, Salop, Middlesex, and the manor Medmenham in co. Buckingham, to hold with knights' fees, advowsons, and all other things pertaining, thereto. Witnesses: John de Bohun of Midhurst, Edward

de Sancto Johanne, Thomas de Brewose, Roger Lestraunge, John Lestraunge, John de Leyburn, John son of John de Cherleton, Thomas West, Walter de Hopton, Baldwin de Frivill, John le Botiller.

Memorandum, that the king by writ of privy seal dated near Caleys on 30 January 1347, ordered the chancellor to cause the preceding deed, which Maurice and Edward acknowledged before the king on that day, to be enrolled, and it is enrolled by virtue of that order.

Cal. Close Rolls, 1346–49, p. 244.

It is of passing interest that this deed was enrolled within a few months of the battle of Cressy (26th August 1346), in which campaign the Earl of Arundel was commander of the Second Division.

Some years later permission was sought and secured by the same Richard Earl of Arundel, to grant the manor of Medmenham, with other property, as a separate estate to his son, Richard FitzAlan II, on the marriage of the latter to Elizabeth de Bohun, daughter of William Earl of Northampton.

Sandwich, 28 September 1359.

Licence for Richard, earl of Arundel, to grant to Richard his son, and Elizabeth daughter of William de Bohun, earl of Northampton, in tail, the manor of Medmenham, of the value of £50 yearly, as is said, and £216 13*s*. 4*d*. of rent out of the castle and lordship of Chirk in the march of Wales, which manor castle and lordship are held in chief, with reversion to the earl of Arundel and his heirs.

Cal. Pat. Rolls, 1358–61, p. 274.

This transfer had not been recorded before an event happened showing that feudal service was no mere figure of speech. Every county had its " arrayers of men and archers," to see that each lord fulfilled his feudal duty, and the manor which failed to produce its quota of warriors was visited with severe penalties. In the year 1360 a fine was inflicted on the manor of Medmenham for failure to contribute men and arms for the defence of the realm

against the French fleet which pillaged Winchelsea in March 1360, but the fine was afterwards remitted on appeal to the Crown.

> Westminster, 22 November 1360.
> To the arrayers in Buckinghamshire of men at arms and archers to sail for the king's service.
> Order to stay altogether the demand made upon Richard earl of Arundell, for payment of any sums whatsoever for his manor of Medmenham towards the expenses of men at arms, armed men, and archers, to march against the king's enemies of France, releasing any distraint, and restoring any levy made upon him for that reason, as the earl was arrayed and furnished in Sussex with men at arms, armed men and archers, to the utmost of his power for all his lands at the time when those enemies were at sea for the purpose of invading the realm, ready to resist them had they presumed to land upon the sea coast of that county, as the king is fully informed.
> *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1360–64, p. 83.

Richard FitzAlan III, who succeeded his father in 1376 as Earl of Arundel, became under King Richard II Lord High Treasurer, Chief Butler of England, and Admiral of all England. Having been associated with the unpopular Regency of the Duke of Gloucester during the minority of the King, this Earl of Arundel came to an untimely end. At the instigation of King Richard II he was impeached by the Commons, and executed 18th September 1397, pursuant to the sentence of his peers, while his estates were forfeited to the Crown. The Duke of Gloucester also came to a violent end. He was arrested in the King's presence, and sent to Calais, where he was smothered in bed.

At the time of the Earl's decease it appears that the manor of Medmenham was then being farmed by Bartholomew Colrugg, who held it at a rent of £40 a year from the FitzAlan family.

> Inquisition taken at Colbrook co. Buck Monday next after the feast of St. Lucy the Virgin 21 Ric. II. (17 Dec. 1397) before Thomas Aldebury clerk and John Asplion by virtue

of the commission to them and others therefor directed, by the oath of Richard Lychyng, John Kene, John Tete, John Welcus, the younger, John Wy(t)he, William Beys, the elder, William Rauell, Thomas Dauy, John Symmes, William Gome, John Langeleye, and William Broun, jurors, who say that Richard late earl of Arundel deceased held in his demesne as of fee on 19 November 10 Ric. II. (1386) and afterwards, the manor of Medmenham. And they say that the manor aforesaid is worth yearly £40 because it is thus let to farm to Bartholomew Colrugg whereof the said Bartholomew owes £20 for Easter term last past.

Chancery Inquisitions Miscellaneous, File 266, No. 2.

In the few days which elapsed between the forfeiture of the manor and its bestowal elsewhere, a vigilant snatcher of office procured from the Crown a life appointment as Keeper of the Warren of Medmenham.

Westminster, 26 September 1397.
Grant, for life, to the king's servant Nicholas Monketon of the keepership of the warren of Medmenham co. Buckingham, late of Richard earl of Arundel, and now the king's by reason of his forfeiture.

Cal. Pat. Rolls, 1396–99, p. 195.

DESPENSER FAMILY

The manor of Medmenham was next granted to Thomas Baron le Despenser, whom King Richard II in 1398 also created Earl of Gloucester, but he retained possession of the manor for only two years.

Westminster, 28 September 1397.
Grant to Thomas le Despencer, earl of Gloucester, and Constance his wife, and the heirs male of the body of the said Thomas, of the castle and manor of Elmeley Castell, and the manors of Wykwaue, Grafton, Flevarth, Abbudley, Great Coumberton, and Elmeley Lovet, forfeited by virtue of the judgement in Parliament against Thomas, earl of Warwick, and the manor of Mebbenham by Marlowe, forfeited by Richard late earl of Arundel, together with all lands, rents, reversions therein, and all franchises, liberties, services, customs, warrens, fees and advowsons belonging thereto, to hold

the same from the day of the judgements pronounced against the said earls ; and grant to the said Thomas, for life, of the keeping of the castle of Gloucester.

Cal. Pat. Rolls, 1396–99, p. 219.

A jealous and vindictive quarrel, started by King Richard II against the Duke of Lancaster, brought his reign to a speedy end. The King was deposed from his royal estate, and by an order of Henry IV the Earl of Gloucester was degraded 6th October 1399, and in the following January was beheaded at Bristol. He left a widow, Constance, daughter of Edmund de Langley, Duke of York, K.G., with two children, Richard and Isabel. Constance was permitted by Henry IV to retain for life the manor of Marlow, but the manor of Medmenham was restored to the Arundel family.

THE DIVISION OF THE MANOR

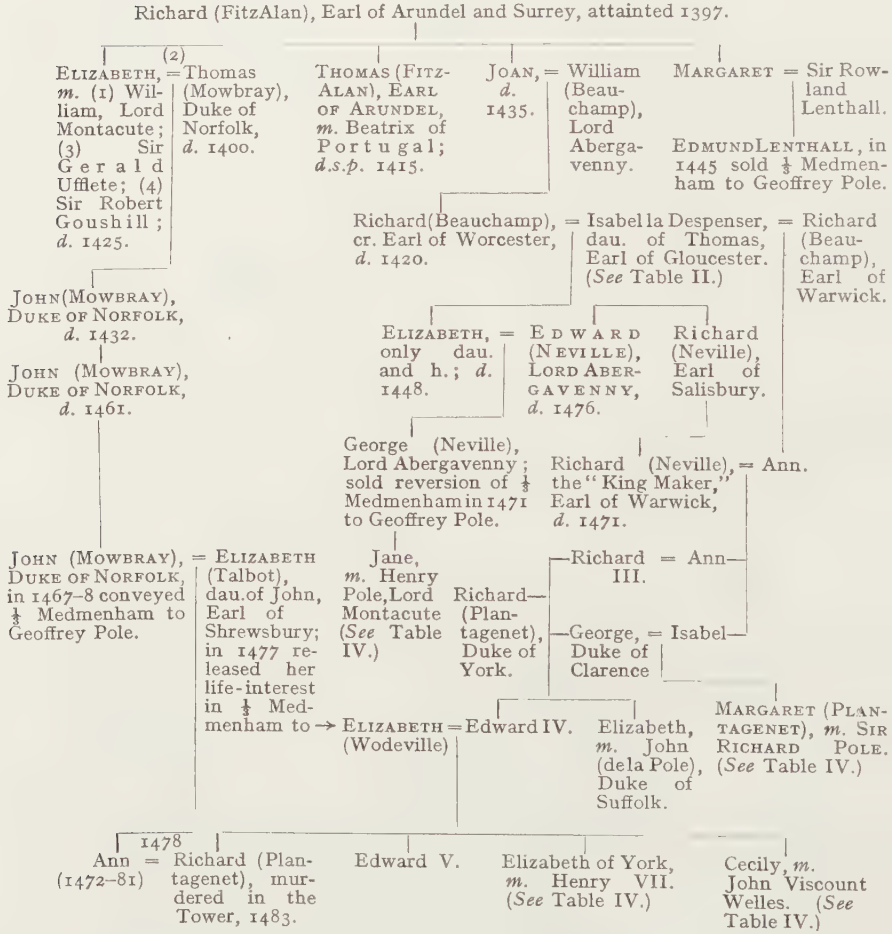
Thomas FitzAlan, Earl of Arundel, K.G., to whom 28th November 1399 the family estates were restored, married Beatrix, natural daughter of Juan I, King of Portugal. He was Chief Butler of England, Constable of Dover Castle, Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, and High Treasurer of England. On his death, which happened 13th October 1415, the manor of Medmenham was divided between his three surviving sisters : Elizabeth, widow of Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk ; Joan, widow of William Beauchamp, Lord Abergavenny ; and Margaret, widow of Sir Rowland Lenthall. It was not until about sixty years later, when the severed parts were separately acquired by Geoffrey Pole, that the manor of Medmenham was again united into a single holding.

THE LENTHALL THIRD OF MEDMENHAM

Margaret FitzAlan, youngest sister of Thomas Earl of Arundel, became the wife of Sir Rowland

FITZALAN COHEIRS AND THE PLANTAGENETS *

ARMS: (Mowbray)—Gu., a lion rampant arg. Crest: a leopard or, ducally gorged arg.
(Beauchamp, Baron Abergavenny)—Gu., a fess between six crosses crosslet or, with a mullet for difference.
(Lenthall)—Arg., on a bend cotised sable three mullets or.


Richard (FitzAlan), Earl of Arundel and Surrey, attainted 1397.
ELIZABETH, m. (1) William, Lord Montacute; (3) Sir Gerald Ufflete; (4) Sir Robert Goushill; d. 1425.
(2) Thomas (Mowbray), Duke of Norfolk, d. 1400.
THOMAS (FITZALAN), EARL OF ARUNDEL, m. Beatrix of Portugal; d.s.p. 1415.
JOAN, d. 1435.
William (Beauchamp), Lord Abergavenny.
MARGARET
Sir Rowland Lenthall.
EDMUND LENTHALL, in 1445 sold ⅓ Medmenham to Geoffrey Pole.
Richard (Beauchamp), cr. Earl of Worcester, d. 1420.
Isabella Despenser, dau. of Thomas, Earl of Gloucester. (See Table II.)
Richard (Beauchamp), Earl of Warwick.
JOHN (MOWBRAY), DUKE OF NORFOLK, d. 1432.
JOHN (MOWBRAY), DUKE OF NORFOLK, d. 1461.
ELIZABETH, only dau. and h.; d. 1448.
EDWARD (NEVILLE), LORD ABERGAVENNY, d. 1476.
Richard (Neville), Earl of Salisbury.
George (Neville), Lord Abergavenny; sold reversion of ⅓ Medmenham in 1471 to Geoffrey Pole.
Richard (Neville), the "King Maker," Earl of Warwick, d. 1471.
Ann.
JOHN (MOWBRAY), DUKE OF NORFOLK, in 1467–8 conveyed ⅓ Medmenham to Geoffrey Pole.
ELIZABETH (Talbot), dau. of John, Earl of Shrewsbury; in 1477 released her life-interest in ⅓ Medmenham to
Jane, m. Henry Pole, Lord Montacute (See Table IV.)
Richard (Plantagenet), Duke of York.
Richard III.
Ann
George, Duke of Clarence
Isabel
ELIZABETH (Wodeville)
Edward IV.
Elizabeth, m. John (de la Pole), Duke of Suffolk.
MARGARET (PLANTAGENET), m. SIR RICHARD POLE. (See Table IV.)
1478
Ann (1472–81)
Richard (Plantagenet), murdered in the Tower, 1483.
Edward V.
Elizabeth of York, m. Henry VII. (See Table IV.)
Cecily, m. John Viscount Welles. (See Table IV.)

* Based upon G.E.C. *Complete Peerage*, and documents cited in the text. Names in SMALL CAPITALS denote lords of Medmenham Manor, or portions of Medmenham Manor.

Table No. III.

Lenthall, but was a widow at the time she acquired her share of the manor of Medmenham. Their son Edmund Lenthall, who married Margaret Tresham, inherited the considerable estates of both his parents.

The Lenthall property was mostly in this neighbourhood, where they owned lands around Henley-on-Thames and Hambleden. Subsequent generations of the family also acquired the manors of Lacheford and Burford. The possessions of the Arundels were largely in Sussex. The first appearance of Geoffrey Pole on the local horizon was as one of the trustees for the administration of the Lenthall estate, and he was so attracted by the neighbourhood as a desirable home that he acquired for himself the Lenthall interest in the manor of Medmenham.

> Know all present and to come that I Edmund Leynthale esq. have given granted and by this present my charter have confirmed to Geoffrey Pole esq. the whole third part of the manor of Medmenham with all lands etc. to the same belonging To have and to hold to Geoffrey his heirs and assigns for ever of the chief lords of that fee by the services therefrom owing and of right accustomed. And I, indeed, the said Edmund, and my heirs will warrant the aforesaid third part to the aforesaid Geoffrey and his heirs, against all men, for ever. Witness : Thomas Rokes, John Brekenok, Thomas Cheyne, William Staverton esquires, William Pekke and many others. Dated at Medmenham, Thursday after Easter 23 Hen. VI. (1 April 1445).
>
> *Miscellaneous Books* (*Augmentation Office*), vol. 32, No. 122.

The above transaction left Edmund Lenthall nothing of his property in Medmenham, except Borough Farm, which the family continued to hold until it was sold by one William Lenthall to Robert Scrope of Hambleden. This descendant was father of the famous William Lenthall, a native of Henley-on-Thames. The latter will always be chiefly remembered as the Speaker of the Long Parliament,

who dared to maintain in the presence of an angry monarch the privilege of the House of Commons.

THE MOWBRAY THIRD OF MEDMENHAM

The eldest sister of Thomas FitzAlan had become the second wife of Thomas Mowbray, who some years later was created second Duke of Norfolk for the part he had taken against his father-in-law and the Duke of Gloucester. The younger son of this marriage, John Mowbray I, to whom the title descended after the execution of his brother Thomas Mowbray II in 1405, grew up to be, in the words of a contemporary, "a manfulle man." He rendered distinguished service to his country through the long wars of the English in France, as well as in the domestic affairs of the nation. During the remarkable career of the Maid of Orleans this Duke of Norfolk was one of the commanders of the English forces in France. He married Lady Katherine Neville, a daughter of Ralph first Earl of Westmorland, and he died 19th October 1432. His interest in Medmenham comprised "a third part of the three parts of Medmenham Manor." In the window of St. Mary's Hall, Coventry, a picture may still be seen of John Mowbray I, fourth Duke of Norfolk.

> Inquisition taken at Ivynghe, co. Buckingham, Thursday next after the feast of St. Wulstan the Bishop, 11 Henry VI. (11th June 1433) before John Qwardeby escheator, by the oath of Thomas Porter, William Hyde, Simon Edward, William Emberton, Richard Aleyn, Richard Pienge, Richard Elyot, John Salcok, Richard Dawners, William atte Fewe, John Messenger, and Richard Merston, who say that John late duke of Norfolk deceased . . . held the day on which he died in his demesne as of fee simple to him and his heirs a third part of the three parts of the manor of Medmenham, but of whom the same part is held the jurors do not know. . . . And they say that in the said part of the manor of Medmenham are rents, 20*s*.; 60 acres of demesne land, of which each acre is worth yearly 6*d*., 12 acres of pasture of which each

acre is worth yearly 15*d*., 20 acres of meadow of which each acre is worth yearly 3*s*., and one underwood which is worth yearly 10*s*. . . . And that John, the late Duke, died Sunday 19th October last past (1432) and that John Mowbray knt. now duke of Norfolk is his son and next heir and was aged 17 years 12 September last past.

Chancery Inquisition post mortem, 11 Henry VI, 43.

The heir of John I and Katherine was John II, born 12th September 1415. At the tender age of ten years King Henry VI created him a knight, and at the decease of his father he succeeded as fifth Duke of Norfolk. This duke must have been in his generation something of a sportsman, just as his late father had been a man of war, for on 11th July 1461 he was appointed " Steward, Chief Warden, and Master of the Game of the Royal Forests, Parks, Chases, and Warrens, South of Trent." Among other virtues he combined the graces of piety and peace ; on seven occasions he acted as pilgrim for Henry VI. This king so perfectly trod the primrose path to a holy reputation, of which sanctity some part at least was acquired by deputy, that the Roman Church has recently started a movement to canonise him. John Mowbray married about 1444 Eleanor, daughter of William Bourchier, Earl of Eu, and he died 6th November 1461, leaving an heir aged just seventeen years.

John Mowbray III, who inherited the family estates, was at six years created Earl of Surrey and Warenne, an old honour associated with the lords of the manor of Medmenham, which title had not been restored to the FitzAlan family after the attainder in 1397 of Richard, then Earl of Arundel. John III, the sixth Duke of Norfolk, took to wife in 1462 Lady Elizabeth Talbot, daughter of John first Earl of Shrewsbury. Their one child, Lady Anne, at the age of five years married Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, one of the princes murdered in the Tower.

The right and title of the Mowbray family in one-third the manor of Medmenham was transferred by John sixth Duke of Norfolk and Elizabeth, his " most dear consort," to Thomas Hoo and others who were the duke's agents, and they in turn conveyed the same interest to Geoffrey Pole of Wittington. These proceedings are confirmed by the duke in the following document :

JOHN DUKE OF NORFFOLK Earl Waren Surrey Mansfield Notyngham Marshal of England Lord of Moubray of Segrave and of Gower and Lord of Bromfield and Yale to all to whom this present writing shall come greeting Know ye that we the aforesaid Duke have remised released and altogether for us & our heirs for ever quit claimed to Geoffrey Pole, esquire, William Laken one of the Justices of the Lord the King assigned to hold pleas before him the said King, John Wellys, Oliver Seynt John, esquires, & Richard Lovell in their full and peaceful possession being, and the heirs and assigns of him the said Geoffrey, all our right title claim interest & demand, which ever we had, now have, or in future could have, in whatsoever manner, of & in the manor of Medmenham with the appurtenances in the county of Buckingham. Which same manor with the appurtenances the aforesaid Geoffrey, William, John Wellys, Oliver and Richard late jointly had to them and the heirs & assigns of the said Geoffrey by the grant demise livery & confirmation of Thomas Hoo, esquire, Richard Leukenore, Bartholomew Bolney, Henry Hyghley, esquires, Roger Philpot, Henry Assheburn, William Lemyng John Sherman and Thomas Bocket and which the aforesaid Thomas Hoo, Richard Leukenore, Bartholomew Bolney, Henry Hyghley, Roger Philpot, Henry Assheburn, William Lemyng, John Sherman, & Thomas Bocket amongst other manors lands & tenements with the appurtenances before had by gift grant & confirmation of us the aforesaid Duke and Elizabeth Duchess of Norffolk our most dear consort & Henry Bradfeld clerk. So, that is to say, that neither we the aforesaid Duke nor our heirs nor any other person for us or in our name henceforth may or ought to demand claim or challenge in future any right title claim interest or demand of & in the aforesaid manor with the appurtenances nor in any parcel thereof. But from all action of right title & claim or anything therein to be sought we may be for ever wholly excluded by these

presents. And moreover we the aforesaid Duke & our heirs will by these presents warrant the aforesaid manor with the appurtenances to the aforesaid Geoffrey, William, John Wellys, Oliver & Richard and the heirs and assigns of the aforesaid Geoffrey against all people for ever. In witness whereof to this our present writing we have set to our seal. Dated the twenty fourth day of the month of August in the year of the reign of King Edward the fourth after the conquest, the eighth

NORF. [Endorsed.]

24 August 8 Edward IV. Duke of Norfolk general release of Medmenham to Jeffrey Poole Esquire William Lakin &c. (i.e. 1468.)

Original Muniment.
In possession of Rt. Hon. Viscount Devonport, P.C.

THE BEAUCHAMP THIRD OF MEDMENHAM

Joan FitzAlan, second sister to the seventh Earl of Arundel, had married William Beauchamp, Lord Abergavenny, by whom she had a son Richard, created Earl of Worcester ; but at the time of her brother's death Joan was a widow. Her son Richard married Isabel Despenser, daughter of the ill-fated Earl of Gloucester, who for a brief period possessed the lordship of Medmenham, and Richard died in 1420, leaving a child Elizabeth. In the year 1435 Joan also died, when her interest in Medmenham descended to Elizabeth, who had become the wife of Sir Edward Neville, Lord Abergavenny, son of the Earl of Westmorland.

Writ Westminster 15 November 14 Henry VI. (1435) Inquisition taken at Aylesbury Thursday next before the feast of St. Matthias the Apostle 14 Henry VI. (23 February 1436) before Thomas Rokes escheator, by the oath of William Grace of Chesham, Henry Loveden, William Smyth of Medmenham, William Wodehouse of Chesham, William Combe, John Goodman, William Agyn, Thomas Cok, Thomas Foorde, John Thorpe of Woddesdon, William Ravenyng of Bysshoppeston and Henry Smyth who say that Joan who was the wife of William de Bello Campo knight held the day on which she died, in her demesne as of fee the third part of the manor of

Medmenham, in which same third part are 4 messuages of which each messuage is worth yearly beyond reprises 6*s*. 8*d*. and there are there 60 acres of land, each acre worth 4*d*. yearly ; 100 acres of pasture, each acre worth yearly 12*d*. ; 28 acres of meadow, each acre worth yearly 2*s*. ; 20 acres of wood, each acre worth yearly 12*d*. ; 2*s*. of free rent issuing from certain tenements of free tenants. The said third part is not held of the king but of whom or by what service they do not know.

[Knights' fees held in various other places.]

And Joan held no other lands or tenements in the county aforesaid of the king nor of any other person in demesne nor in service the day on which she died. And she died 14 Nov. last past (1435) and Elizabeth wife of Edward Neuille is kinswoman and heir of Joan, to wit, daughter of Richard son of the same Joan, and is aged 18 years and more.

Chancery Inquisition post mortem, 14 Henry VI, File 76, No. 35.

After the death of Elizabeth her husband continued to enjoy her property during his lifetime by the " courtesy of England," but while he still retained his interest the future possession thereof, contingent upon the father's death, was sold by his son George Neville to Geoffrey Pole of Wittington, and thereafter Geoffrey covenanted to pay to George and his heirs ten marks yearly :

Octave of the Purification, 49 Hen. VI. (and first year of his recovery of the royal power), i.e. 9th February, 1470.

Final Concord between Geoffrey Pole Esq., querent, and George Nevill Esq. son and heir of Elizabeth who was wife of Edward Nevill knight, deforciant, of one third of the manor of Medmenham, which Edward Nevill knight holds for life by the law of England.

George granted the reversion of the third upon the death of Edward to Geoffrey and his heirs.

Geoffrey granted that after the death of Edward he would pay yearly to George and his heirs 10 marks, half at Easter and half at Michaelmas.

Feet of Fines (Mixed Counties), Case 294, File 75, No. 45.

ATTAINDER OF HENRY POLE

THE POLE FAMILY

The death of Edward Lord Abergavenny in 1476 brought to Geoffrey Pole the complete ownership of the lordship of Medmenham, subject to a rent charge of £6 13*s.* 4*d.* He had acquired the first third in 1445 from Edmund Lenthall, the second third he purchased in 1468 from John Duke of Norfolk, and the remainder he secured from George Neville just thirty years after his first transaction.

The manor of Medmenham continued in the ownership of the Pole family until the upheaval following the matrimonial complications of Henry VIII, when the vindictiveness of the King, through the unscrupulous agency of Thomas Cromwell, resulted in 1539 in the execution of Henry Pole, Lord Montacute, on a charge of high treason. In the same year the deceased nobleman was attainted, and his property escheated to the Crown. The manor of Medmenham at that time was valued at £33 7*s.* 9*d.* per annum.

While these events were proceeding to a crisis, other things were happening which contributed to the disturbed condition of the country. The Bill for the Suppression of Smaller Religious Houses was introduced into Parliament 4th February 1536, and quickly passed into law. Within three months of that time the monks of Medmenham were dispersed, and there appeared as the new tenant of the Abbey house and lands one Thomas More, an officer of the King's Cellar. On the attainder of Henry Lord Montacute in 1539, Thomas More secured the custody of the manors of Medmenham and Ellesborough, which he was commissioned to administer for life on behalf of the King, with an annuity of five marks to himself as steward :

> Westminster, 20 July 31 Henry VIII (1539).
> Grant to Thomas More, one of the officers of the King's Cellar of the office of bailiff of the manors of Medmeham and

Ellesborough, in Buckinghamshire, together with the custody of the manor of Bulbek, now in the King's gift by reason of the attainder of Henry Pole late knight and lord of Montacute. To hold to Thomas for his life, together with an annuity of 5 marks for his life also pannage and " le Wyndfall wood," within the said manor.

Patent Roll, No. 689, m. 36.

SIR THOMAS PALMER

In the year 1552 Edward VI granted the manor of Medmenham to Sir Thomas Palmer, a zealous adherent of Henry Grey, Duke of Suffolk. According to the following grant the manor was then returned as being of the net value of £31 15*s*. 10*d*. a year.

Particulars for a grant to Sir Thomas Palmer.
Parcel of the possessions of Henry Pole lord de Mountacute, attainted for high treason.

The Manor of Medmenham is worth in :—
Rent of assize of all free tenants there by the year 21*s*.
Rent of tenants by copy of court roll there by the year £13 19*s*. 8*d*.
Rent of tenants at will of the King there by the year 100*s*.
Farm of the site of the Manor there with all appurtenances demised to Thomas More for a term of years, rendering therefor yearly £15 0*s*. 8*d*.
Perquisites of court there by the average year 20s.
(Sum) £36 16*d*.

Reprises in :—
Rent resolute yearly issuing from the manor there by the year 18*s*. 10*d*.
Fee of Thomas More Bailiff there by virtue of Letters Patent of the Lord King by the year 66*s*. 8*d*.
(Sum) £4 5*s*. 6*d*.
And it is worth clearly by the year £31 15*s*. 10*d*.

Memorandum that the King's Majesty hath a wood lying within the parish of Medmenham called Buckemerewoode what value they be of I know not.

By John Pykarell, Auditor.
Particulars for Grants (*Augmentation Office*), 1840.

Sir Thomas Palmer suffered on the scaffold, 22nd August 1553, for attempting to place on the throne Lady Jane Grey, the daughter of his patron, and the manor again escheated to the Crown; while Lady Jane Grey, her father, and her uncles atoned for the ambition of the house of Suffolk by the death of traitors.

WILLIAM AND BARBARA RICE

In the same year the manor of Medmenham was granted to William Rice and Barbara his wife, who made their home at Bockmer. The story of Bockmer in another chapter will give some account of the developments of subsequent years.

BOLEBEC CASTLE

Three centuries of cold neglect hastened the fate of the old manor house, which had been some time the residence of baron and earl; but it was still habitable late in the sixteenth century, for it was then transferred in an indenture by William Rice. The document refers to the castle as "a messuage in Medmenham called Bulbankes," inferring that it was then a dwelling-house, and it was acquired by James Duffield with the Rood House and certain fields, in exchange for other lands.

In the following century the castle had fallen into decay, but the ruined walls were still standing. Dr. Thomas Hearne about 1700 remarked that it was then known as Bulbank's Castle, and it was reputed to be "part of the Mannour House of Hugh de Bolebec." The stream from the village spring to New Lock continued to be identified until the nineteenth century as Bulbank's Ditch.

In the Bodleian Library is a manuscript containing information collected by Browne Willis for a County History of Buckinghamshire. One passage

speaks of the two ancient camps of Medmenham, saying :

> In a vale between them is a down called Bury Down, where bones are found and armour hath been plowed up, particularly in the Field where the Castle stood, and several sorts of pavements have been discovered.
>
> *Rawlinson MS.*, B. 263, p. 359.

These facts were furnished by David Dicconson, at that time (1690–1716) vicar of Medmenham. The vale called Bury Down is now a plantation above the meadow north of the road to Marlow, extending up to the Hermitage Plot. It is still known as Bury Dene. The castle stood, according to tradition, in the field south of States, within the eastern rampart of the prehistoric earthworks, and in this area the pavements referred to were no doubt unearthed. A systematic search for ancient remains in the neighbourhood ought to bring to light interesting material, because all the results hitherto recorded have been the fruit of casual discoveries.

The complete disappearance of solid masonry is not to be wondered at, when it is remembered that disused buildings were the convenient quarries of successive generations. It is quite probable that certain houses in the neighbourhood, which were rebuilt in the seventeenth century, were erected from the remains of what had once been the proud and noble Castle of Bolebec.

CHAPTER III

WITTINGTON

" And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden."

EZEKIEL (*fl.* 600 B.C.)

CHAPTER III

WITTINGTON

THE favourable situation of Wittington, abutting on the river and possessing valuable defensive advantages, would naturally have attracted any settler in a hostile country, and the name of the place quite plainly belongs to the Anglo-Saxon invasion. The name of the old Teutonic settler, recognised by its termination in *ing* or *ling*, is very commonly found in our local place-names. Among such family names transferred to places are Barking, Basing, and Bocking, each of the places so called being possibly an original settlement of several members of the same family. Thus Billing, a remote ancestor of the Royal Race of Saxony, appears in Billingham, Billinghurst, and Billingsgate.

The internal evidence to be derived from the name and situation suggests that Wittington was a settlement made probably during the invasion of the sixth century by the Saxon family of Witting, a conclusion supported by the frequency with which the stem of the word occurs in other place-names throughout Saxon England, e.g. Witham, Witney, Witton, Wittenham, and Whittingham. They were possibly attracted to their place of settlement by the promontory fortress near at hand, which provided a convenient refuge if their rights of possession were ever disputed. The smaller colonies in Wessex, such as Wittington, seem to have been grouped into the larger lordships during the reign of King Alfred (871–901), when multiples of the five-hide unit were created to form a basis for calculating military service. In this process Wittington was consolidated with Medmenham, Harleyford and

Widmer were united with Great Marlow, and Yewden was joined up into Hambleden. Some writers still loosely refer to these lesser settlements as manors or lordships, but in actual fact they possessed no separate territorial jurisdiction, which was the one distinguishing feature of the manor. They each rendered feudal service to the chief lords of the district, and they were taxed for military or for crown purposes only as part of the consolidated manor.

CHALK CLIFFS

The chalk cliffs of Wittington were the quarries of untold generations from which a great deal of Hurley village was built, as well as other places more remote. The tithe-barn and the dovecot at Hurley are notable works of antiquity built from these quarries. The navigable rivers of the country were for centuries the principal high roads of commerce. As far as London barges went, carrying their loads of stone. The Anglo-Saxon name for Chelsea was Cealchythe, signifying it was a hythe or landing-place for chalk. The quarry at Wittington was conveniently alongside the river, and the extent to which the cliff has been cut away indicates that countless barge-loads of stone must have been excavated and despatched along the stream to their destination.

The material for building Medmenham Abbey in the thirteenth century was quarried at Wittington, and was apparently conveyed to the site by barges on the river.

> Abbendon, 9 July 1245.
> It is commanded to the wardens of the works of the Castle of Windes' [Windsor] that they permit the Abbot of Medmenham to have one or two boats on the waters of the Thames for carrying stone for doing works on his own house and he shall have them without any obstruction.
>
> *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1242–47, p. 325.

The works then in progress at Windsor Castle were the considerable extensions undertaken by Henry III, and of these the lower part of the Bell Tower still remains intact. It is a crypt with walls of immense thickness, constructed of chalk faced with freestone and vaulted on massive stone ribs. The permission given to the abbot of Medmenham was evidently granted while the wardens were transporting stone to Windsor by water, and as Wittington was the only extensive quarry within reach of Windsor it seems fairly conclusive that the older part of Windsor Castle was built from material quarried at Wittington.

A discovery of antiquarian value was made in 1915 during the alterations then being made to the gardens at the base of the chalk cliffs, consisting of a jug of the fourteenth or fifteenth century in perfect condition. The jug was of red earthenware, decorated in relief with grapes and vine leaves laid on in thick white slip before the application of yellow lead glaze, an early and rare example of that kind of work in England. It was presented by Lord Devonport to the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington, where it is now on exhibition.

SECRET PASSAGES AT HARLEYFORD AND LODGE FARM

It is strange how legends of underground passages haunt old country houses. During some excavations at Ladye Place, Hurley, in 1909, a passage in a good state of repair leading towards the Thames was discovered. In his book on Ladye Place, the late Mr. Hancock expressed the opinion that the passage extended under the river to the grounds of Harleyford, and thence turned sharply under Wittington estate in the direction of Medmenham Abbey. The incident shows how fables of mystery, like the ghosts of Banquo and Hamlet's father, steadfastly refuse to disappear. The said passage, which was again uncovered in 1924,

was probably a disused cellar or the monastery drain, but the rest of the story was the product of a fertile imagination. A similar legend is connected with Lodge Farm, where the wondering visitor is still shown the entrance to an underground passage, reputed to lead to Bockmer House. It is the sort of story one would expect in a book of fairy tales, but the evidence of hard facts is against such a conclusion as a matter of history.

In all such tales two questions have to be faced: Is it possible? and, Was it probable? To tunnel under the Thames, through soaking gravel, from Hurley to Medmenham would, in the Middle Ages, have been a feat worthy of Brunel; moreover, the monks of the respective houses belonged to rival Orders. And why a respectable citizen should want to dig himself out of Bockmer House through a mile of chalk and gravel is a problem which legend, strange though it may seem, has never attempted to explain.

THE DE WITTINGTON SURNAME

The invasion of the Norman duke changed the ownership of land in the person of the overlord rather than in its occupation. During the Norman period occasional glimpses appear of Wittington as a residence of some consequence, but there is not sufficient evidence to reconstruct the entire history, or to relate the adventures and occupation of the actual tenants. Wherever life has flowed in peaceful channels history is silent, because the principal facts concerning ancient families are discovered mostly in the records of stormy quarrels or of legal proceedings. One William de Wydindon was juror at an inquisition made about 1265 concerning the manor of Medmenham. In the same panel of jurymen was a William de la Lude, evidently an early representative of a family which was associated with Wittington for nearly 200 years.

A SOCIAL REVOLUTION

The change of ownership by which the Hall lands of Wittington were conveyed to the de la Lude family occurred during one of those periods of wide social revolution which have regularly marked our national life. The old ties were not severed at once. For a number of years the de Wittington family continued to possess interests in this neighbourhood. One descendant, Ralph de Wydyndone, was the husband of Isabel de Medmenham, a lady of consequence, whose forebears had been prominent in the life of the village for at least two centuries. Their names occur together in sundry land transactions. One of these is reproduced below, from which it appears that 600 years ago freehold land in Medmenham was valued at 7*s.* 5*d.* an acre. About five years after this deed of sale, in another such document, Isabel described herself as in her "pure widowhood."

> Westminster. In the quindene of Easter
> 10 Edw. II. (17 April 1317).
> Betw. William atte Park of Colum and Clemencia his wife querent, and Ralph son of Ralph de Wydyndone and Isabel his wife deforciant, of 36 acres of land in Medmeham.
> Plea of Covenant. To hold to William and Clemencia and the heirs of William of the chief lords of that fee by the services which to the land belong for ever. And moreover Ralph and Isabel have granted for themselves and the heirs of Isabel that they will warrant to William and Clemencia and the heirs of William the aforesaid land against all men for ever. And for this William and Clemencia have given Ralph and Isabel 20 marks of silver.
>
> *Feet of Fines*, Case 18, File 69.

A deed of sale disposing of the river rights of Harleyford in 1372 was witnessed by William de Wydindon (*Westminster Abbey Mun.*, No. 3462).

DE LA LUDE FAMILY

William de la Lude, founder of the family fortunes, was apparently a burgess of Wycombe who, retiring

from business, had acquired the tenant rights of Wittington. It was the custom of the age. The increase of industrial wealth which marked that period showed itself in the growing desire of burgesses to become proprietors of land, and the legislation of Edward I had facilitated the process.

To the same social revolution, as well as to the large statesmanship of Edward I, we owe our Parliament, and here it is of interest to recall that John de la Lude of Wittington, descendant of the above William, was one of the first of parliamentary burgesses in this neighbourhood. When representation was extended in 1295 to boroughs, the sheriff of Buckinghamshire had reported to the King that he could find but one single borough, that of Wycombe, within the county. In the Parliament at Westminster, 28 Edward I (1300), the two burgesses returned for the borough of Wycombe were John de la Lude and Thomas le Taylur. In the next Parliament of the same year convened at Lincoln, members were first sent for the borough of Great Marlow, which included the parish of Medmenham. While Parliament was in session the members each received from their grateful constituents a maintenance allowance of 2*s*. a day, which remuneration was about equivalent to the modern scale of £400 a year. The Wittington family was designated de la Lude, or de Lude, or de Luda de Wittenham, according to the inimitable and casual style of the age. The two titles are found combined in the name of a vicar of Medmenham (1355–60), who was Sir Ralf de Luda de Wittenham. There are many variations in ancient documents in the spelling of the place-name, such as Widdington, Wydyndone, Whittenton, Whittingdon, Wittenham, Wedon, Withun, and Wydinton.

WITTINGTON

(*Aed.* 1898–1909)

THE name of Wittington links the present house with remote Saxon origins. It is the mansion of one of the historical estates of South Buckinghamshire, which possesses title-deeds extending backwards in unbroken order for over 800 years. The present house, designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield, R.A., and built for the Right Hon. Lord Devonport, superseded the ruins of an older habitation nearer the public highway. The view from the terrace in the foreground over the Thames valley is one of the most beautiful examples of inland scenery.

To face p. 65.

THE LAST OF THE BARONS

IN THE WARS OF THE ROSES

The Wars of the Roses (1455–85) were contested in many parts of the country, but the end of the story was witnessed at Medmenham. The Plantagenets, the Nevilles, and the Poles, leaders of the House of York, all had associations in this neighbourhood. The declining hopes of the White Rose party were dimmed by the marriage of Margaret Plantagenet to Richard, the unambitious son of Geoffrey Pole, and they finally expired in the tragic fate of the aged Lady Margaret and her eldest son.

After the death of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Worcester, who until 1420 held the Beauchamp third of Medmenham, his widow Isabel, by dispensation of the pope, married Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, K.G., her deceased husband's cousin, founder of the famous Beauchamp Chapel (*aed.* 1443–64) at Warwick, who under Henry VI was Governor of France and Normandy. In the chapel at Warwick, Richard Beauchamp, once the part-owner of Medmenham, lies in enduring brass, sardonic and impulsive, above his marble tomb, and he seems still to live. By his marriage with Isabel he had two children, Henry and Ann. The former became King of the Isle of Wight and Duke of Warwick, but " this hopeful branch . . . was cropped in the flower of his youth, before the fruit of his heroic disposition could be manifested to the world, for he died at Hanley Castle in Worcestershire, June 11th 1445, being but twenty-two years of age." The daughter, Ann, of Isabel's second marriage, became wife of Richard Neville, son and heir of the Earl of Salisbury.

This Richard Neville, who was created Earl of Warwick after the death of Henry Beauchamp, has been picturesquely styled the " Last of the Barons," and is famous in history as the King Maker. He lies

buried near his father and brother in the Abbey Chapel at Bisham, where his body was brought in 1471 after the battle of Barnet. His elder daughter, Isabel, married George, Duke of Clarence, K.G., K.B., and became the mother of Margaret Plantagenet, wife of Sir Richard Pole, lord of the manor of Medmenham. His second daughter, Ann, to whom the manor of Marlow descended, was betrothed to Edward, Prince of Wales, slain in the battle of Tewkesbury, 1471. In the following year Ann married Richard Plantagenet, Duke of Gloucester, afterwards Richard III. This monarch will be remembered in history as the wicked uncle who instigated the slaying of the princes in the Tower, and achieved his ambition through a series of murders. In the Rolls of Parliament (17 Edw. IV. 10) the Mowbray third of Medmenham is named as part of the dowry bestowed upon Richard, Duke of York, one of the murdered princes, on his marriage to Ann, daughter of the Duke of Norfolk ; but the latter had disposed of his share of Medmenham to Geoffrey Pole some nine years before that time. The " wicked uncle " met his own violent fate in 1485 on Bosworth Field, when the Crown passed to Henry VII, grandson of Owen Tudor, the compatriot of Geoffrey Pole.

THE LENTHALL THIRD OF MEDMENHAM

Towards the middle of the fifteenth century, Wittington became the home of Geoffrey Pole. His interest in this neighbourhood arose partly through the fact that he was one of the trustees of Edmund Lenthall. There were also other attractions. It was a place of some charm, within an easy ride of Windsor, and therefore within the magic circle of the Court, a feature which in itself has contributed largely to enrich the romantic associations of South Buckinghamshire. Prompted by such impulses Geoffrey Pole purchased,

about the time of his first marriage, the interest of Edmund Lenthall in one-third the manor of Medmenham, which comprised the Hall lands of Wittington, and there he lived for more than thirty years. The house was then of considerable extent, standing on the site now occupied by the farm buildings.

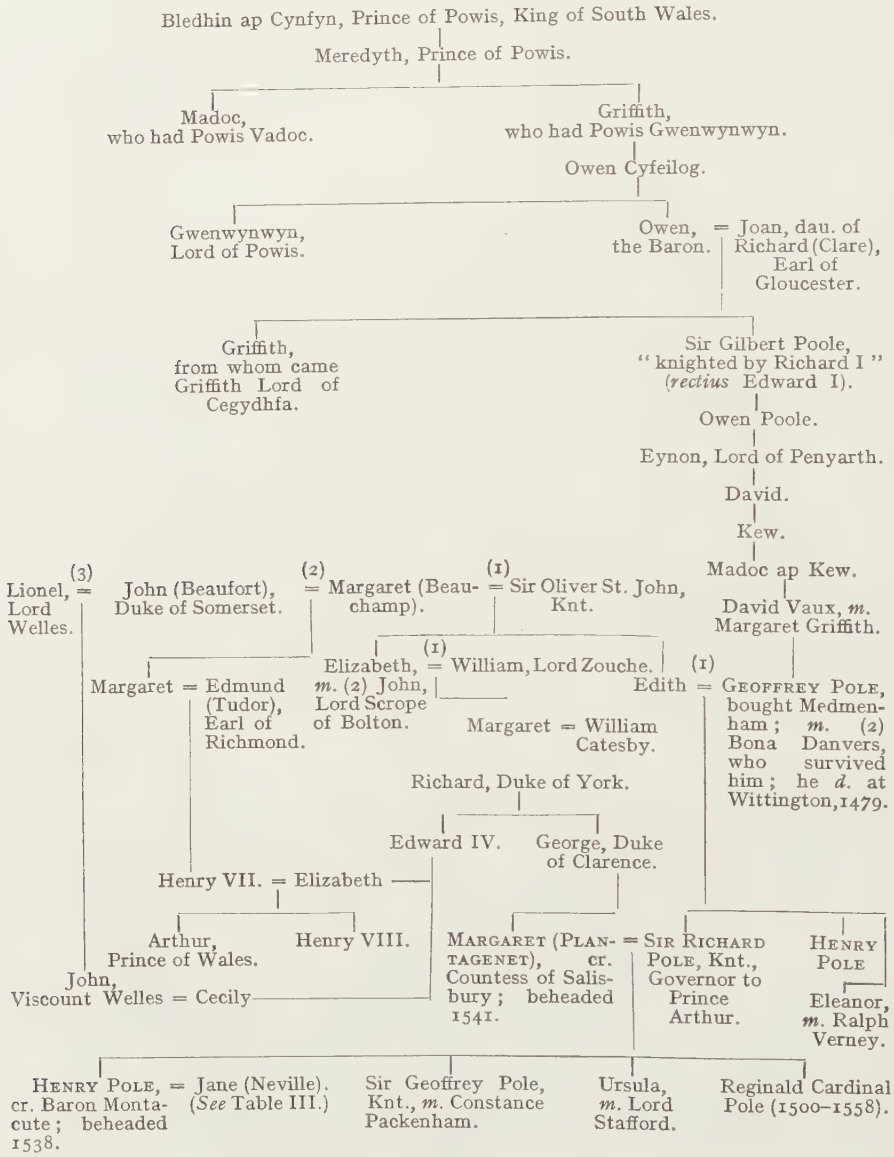
THE POLE FAMILY

There were two main families of Poole, or Pole, wide apart in their origin, but eventually joined by marriage. The English family of that name was founded by William de la Pole, a merchant and sometime mayor of Kingston-upon-Hull. When Edward III was lying at Antwerp, very destitute of money to prosecute his war in Flanders, William de la Pole lent the King £1000 in gold, in recompense for which (26th September 1339) he was constituted second Baron of the Exchequer, and advanced to the degree of a banneret, with an allowance for the better support of that dignity payable out of the customs at Hull. The family estates descended to Michael de la Pole, Chancellor of England, who, while Chancellor, was created Earl of Suffolk (6th August 1386). One of his successors in the dukedom of Suffolk, William de la Pole, married Alice (*née* Chaucer), who is said to have been granddaughter of the poet Geoffrey Chaucer, and was then widow of Thomas, Earl of Salisbury. She brought to William in marriage the manors of Ewelme and Swynscombe in Oxfordshire. Their son John, afterwards Duke of Suffolk, married Elizabeth Plantagenet, sister of George, Duke of Clarence, and the daughter of this Duke of Clarence became the wife of Sir Richard Pole of Medmenham. By that marriage the two families de la Pole were linked together.

The more ancient line was of Welsh origin. They were the Lords of Powis, descended from Bledhin ap

POLE, OR POOLE (OF WELSHPOOL), AND THE TUDORS*

ARMS: Per pale or and sable, a saltire engrailed counterchanged.


Bledhin ap Cynfyn, Prince of Powis, King of South Wales.
Meredyth, Prince of Powis.
Madoc, who had Powis Vadoc.
Griffith, who had Powis Gwenwynwyn.
Owen Cyfeilog.
Gwenwynwyn, Lord of Powis.
Owen, the Baron.
= Joan, dau. of Richard (Clare), Earl of Gloucester.
Griffith, from whom came Griffith Lord of Cegydhfa.
Sir Gilbert Poole, "knighted by Richard I" (rectius Edward I).
Owen Poole.
Eynon, Lord of Penyarth.
David.
Kew.
Madoc ap Kew.
David Vaux, m. Margaret Griffith.
(3) Lionel, = Lord Welles.
John (Beaufort), Duke of Somerset.
(2) = Margaret (Beauchamp).
(1) = Sir Oliver St. John, Knt.
(1) Elizabeth, = William, Lord Zouche.
m. (2) John, Lord Scrope of Bolton.
Margaret = William Catesby.
(1) Edith = GEOFFREY POLE, bought Medmenham; m. (2) Bona Danvers, who survived him; he d. at Wittington, 1479.
Margaret = Edmund (Tudor), Earl of Richmond.
Richard, Duke of York.
Edward IV.
George, Duke of Clarence.
Henry VII. = Elizabeth
Arthur, Prince of Wales.
Henry VIII.
John, Viscount Welles = Cecily
MARGARET (PLANTAGENET), cr. Countess of Salisbury; beheaded 1541.
= SIR RICHARD POLE, Knt., Governor to Prince Arthur.
HENRY POLE
Eleanor, m. Ralph Verney.
HENRY POLE, cr. Baron Montacute; beheaded 1538.
= Jane (Neville). (See Table III.)
Sir Geoffrey Pole, Knt., m. Constance Packenham.
Ursula, m. Lord Stafford.
Reginald Cardinal Pole (1500–1558).

* Based upon "The Golden Grove" (Bledhinbook); *Pedigrees of Noble Families related to the Blood Royal* (Coll. Top. et Gen.); and documents cited in the text. Names in SMALL CAPITALS denote lords of Medmenham Manor.

Table No. IV.

Cynfyn, Prince of Powis, who in name if not in fact was King of Wales. They took the name Poole, or Pole, from a great lake in the park of Powis Castle, which also gave its name to Welshpool. The lordship of Powis was eventually divided between Madoc and Griffith, sons of Meredyth, Prince of Powis, and it was from the younger son Griffith, Lord of Powis Gwenwynwyn, that Geoffrey Pole descended. The association of the latter with the Principality is also evidenced by the Welsh names of Geoffrey Kedwelly and Morgan Kedwelly, who were among the feoffees upon whom he settled his estate for the uses of his will, and by the important Welsh offices held by his son Richard.

Geoffrey Pole was one of the number of peaceful Welsh invaders who came into power during the fifteenth century. He was part of the Welsh contingent which followed Owen Tudor into England. He found his first wife Edith in the household of Margaret Beaufort, Countess of Richmond, and mother of Henry VII. Edith was the daughter of Sir Oliver St. John, by Margaret Beaufort, grandmother of Henry VII. She was step-sister to Margaret, Countess of Richmond. The children of Geoffrey and Edith were Richard, Henry, and Eleanor. The second wife of Geoffrey was Bona Danvers, fourth sister of Sir Thomas Danvers of Cathorp-by-Banbury.

In the year 1461 Geoffrey Pole, as owner of the Hall lands of the manor of Medmenham, let his fishing rights on the Buckinghamshire half of the Thames for eighty years to the monks of Hurley, who had the fishing on the other side in their own possession, at a rent of £1 6*s*. 8*d*. per annum. The lease included the water and fishing which " of old tyme porteyned to the Hall land wythin the said Lordship of Medmenham." The lessor expressly reserved to himself the right of fishing six times in the year with a draught

net, the Prior of Hurley at such times finding him with " fysshers bootys and seruantes."

Some years afterwards Geoffrey Pole separately acquired from George Neville and from John Mowbray, fourth Duke of Norfolk, all their " right, title, claim, interest, and demand " associated with the remaining two-thirds of the manor of Medmenham. He died at Wittington 4th January 1479, leaving a will in which he desired to be buried with Edith, his first wife, in Bisham Abbey. The feoffees for the execution of this will, some of whom are also named in the transfer from the Duke of Norfolk, included Sir Oliver St. John, father of Edith; John Lord Scrope, who married Edith's sister Elizabeth; John Welles, Edith's half-brother; and William Catesby, nephew of Edith by marriage. The Latin " testament " of Geoffrey Pole provides an instructive example of the elaborate masses for the departed which prevailed four hundred years ago.

Testament of Geoffrey Poole of Withun in the parish of Medmenham.

12th Oct. 1478: To be buried in the monastery Church of Bursham co. Bucks in the same grave with his wife Edith; to his funeral expenses in the most honest fashion without vain glory and pomp of this world £10; to a canon priest of the said monastery, at the Prior's discretion, to celebrate daily for my soul and the souls of my wife, parents, and benefactors and all the faithful departed in the said monastery for 20 years, yearly, for his toil 5 marks out of the manor of Elsbourgh.

I will that my executors, immediately after my death should have 4 trentals of masses celebrated for my soul and the aforesaid souls by the 4 orders of friars of the University of Oxford or elsewhere as my executors will. To each order 10*s*. Another to be celebrated by the monks of Charterhouse London, another by the monks of Charterhouse Shene, and 10*s*. to each house.

To the mother church of Lincoln 4*d*. To the repair of the parish church of Medmenham 40*s*. to be disposed according

to my executors' discretion. To the Vicar of Medmenham Church for my tithes and oblations unpaid, 6*s*. 8*d*.

To my daughter Eleanor 200 marks in money or in silver vessels for her marriage portion if she is governed in her marriage by the discretion of my executors and my other friends.

Item I bequeath to Bona my wife my dwelling house (*mansio*) situate near the Abbey of Medmenham during her life. To the same Bona a silver-gilt cup with a cover in which I was wont to drink wine in the time of my infirmity, also 4 cows, 2 oxen, 40 sheep, and 2 goats. She is to have pasture for these within the demesne of Medmenham and 8 cartloads of firewood yearly so long as she pleases, in the dwelling house of the said manor.

To the Abbot and Convent of Burneham yearly for 5 years after my death for saying prayers in the night immediately after my soul's passing for my soul and *Placebo* and *Dirge* and Requiem Mass on the day following with all the prayers belonging, 6*s*. 8*d*.

To William Danvers a silver cup worth 40*s*. or 40*s*. in money.

To the church of Ellesbourgh a cup worth 26*s*. 4*d*.

Thomas Gate is to have yearly from my manors of Medmenham and Ellesbourgh 13*s*. 4*d*. during the term while my executors take the profits of these manors.

To Margaret Litle and Agnes her daughter 5 marks equally.

To Master Richard Alfrede vicar of Burneham to pray for my soul and the souls of the aforesaid, 100*s*.

The rest of my goods and chattels I give both for the health of my soul and the souls aforesaid and also to be distributed between Richard Pole and Henry Pole my sons as my executors think will best please God and profit my soul.

Executors, Morgan Kedwelly and Richard Alfrede Vicar of Burneham, and my son Richard Pole, 100*s*. each for their labour.

Overseers, Thomas Mountgomerey Knt. and Henry Prior of Bursham.

I bequeath to Thomas Mountgomerey for overseeing my will and for his aid afterwards to my executors and sons £10.

To Henry Prior of Bursham for his labours in supervising my will and to pray for my soul and the aforesaid souls 100*s*.

To my servant Eleanor, 13*s*. 4*d*. To Joan Moore, Eleanor's sister, 6*s*. 8*d*.

P.C.C. 35 *Wattys*.

Such documents as the above were in two parts. The testament (in Latin) disposed of a man's personal

estate. Then followed the will (in English) disposing of his real estate. From this practice arose the modern phrase " last will and testament," because the two are now combined. According to his English will, Geoffrey Pole gave further instructions that his elder son Richard should inherit the manors of Medmenham, Hallonds, and Withmere, and that Henry, on coming of age, was to have the manors of Ellesborough and Stoke Mandeville.

The jurors who were sworn at Marlow, 30th October 1479, to return into Chancery an account of the lands of Geoffrey Pole, did not represent the real situation at his decease. They stated that " the manor of Medmenham is not held of the King but is held of Richard Duke of Gloucester and Anne his wife," whereas the evidence of other records makes it clear that he held the entire manor directly of the King.

The tombs of the Poles, the Montacutes, and the Nevilles, with those of other distinguished people buried at Bisham Abbey, disappeared when the Abbey lands passed into the possession of the Hobye family, although some of the monuments remained standing until the eighteenth century. The Abbey Chapel of Bisham has been the burial-place of perhaps more historical personages than any other country place in England.

THE PORTION OF ELEANOR POLE

After the decease of Geoffrey Pole, the Hall at Wittington seems to have been occupied for some years by the Sands family, of whom very little is known. The widow of Geoffrey went to live at " the dwelling-house situate near the Abbey of Medmenham," and when Richard Pole married Margaret Plantagenet they established themselves at Bockmer. Eleanor, the only daughter, was at her father's death still at home.

THE HALL LANDS

By the will of Geoffrey his daughter Eleanor was to receive "200 marks in money for her marriage portion," provided her selection of a husband was approved by the executors of the estate. In order to secure this amount a moiety of the Hall lands of Wittington was set apart. The boundaries of the above property are described in a conveyance reproduced in the appendix. The Hall lands of Wittington at that time extended from the Marlow Road southward to the Thames, including the whole of Danesfield, and from Harleyford to Hemmyng Well stream, which is still the eastern boundary of Medmenham Abbey. The transaction also comprised other parcels of ground, of which the abuttals are given in the conveyance. This dower was realised in 1496, following Eleanor's marriage to Ralph Verney, by disposing of the moiety to the feoffees of Reginald Bray, who had recently acquired Harleyford. At the same time Richard Pole also sold him the second moiety. Both sales are in identical terms, except that the document not produced here names Ralph Verney and his wife Eleanor as vendors. They also received payment for their moiety, which discharged with interest the dowry of Eleanor.

Final concord Hilary in 15 days 11 Henry VII (1496) between William Smith bishop of Lichfield and Coventry Reginald Bray knt William Hody knt Humphrey Conyngesby Richard Emson Hugh Oldam clerk William Cope and John Shaa, querent and Richard Pole knt and wife Margaret deforciant of a messuage 120 acres land 100 ac meadow 100 ac pasture 100 ac wood and a weir in Medmenham which Richard and Margaret acknowledge to be the right of the bishop, and have remitted and quitclaimed from Richard and Margaret and the heirs of Margaret to the bishop and the others and the heirs of the bishop for ever. Richard and Margaret grant for themselves and the heirs of Margaret that they will warrant the premises to the bishop and the rest and the heirs of the bishop for ever. The bishop and the rest gave Richard and Margaret 300 marks

Feet of Fines (Bucks), Bdle. 22, File 137.

THE DESCENT OF HARLEYFORD

The history of Harleyford has been a source of perplexity to writers about Marlow, who have regarded it as a manor independent of Marlow. This confusion has arisen partly because of a loose usage of the word manor, and partly through Wittington being sometimes described as the manor of Harleyford in Medmenham. The ancient manor included a territorial jurisdiction through its court baron, with rights of fealty and service, which could only be alienated by licence of the Crown, or by permission of the mesne lord between the tenant and the Crown, but Harleyford never possessed feudal rights distinct from Marlow. By the Statutes of Marlborough (1230) and *Quia Emptores* (1290) the creation of new manors was prohibited, so that any estates of later formation still remained part of the ancient unit. New owners might style their houses "manors," just as suburban residences of to-day are adorned with fancy names, but the broad legal distinction remained, in many cases to the confusion of posterity.

In their earlier history Harleyford and Wittington had much the same fortune. They were at one time separate holdings of ancient origin, but in the course of events each was merged into a larger unit, which became the manor, and Harleyford was included in the manor of Marlow. A transaction between Geoffrey de Harleyford and William de Harleyford in 1288, concerning the river-side portion of the estate, refers distinctly to the services "due to the chief lords," who were the Earls of Pembroke. Some fifty years later the river rights of Harleyford were in possession of Richard Gomme, whose son John Gomme, skinner, sold them to William Danyle and Julia his wife. The severed parts of Harleyford were acquired and reunited by John and Agatha Flegge. After the decease of Agatha,

the property was sold by James Cawode, her second husband, to feoffees, who transferred it to Richard Lessey, and he in turn disposed of Harleyford on 6th November 1489–90 to other feoffees, who subsequently conveyed their rights to trustees acting on behalf of Sir Reginald Bray, and among these trustees was a William Sands, the life-tenant of Harleyford (*Oxf. Univ. Archives*, K. II, p. 214).

BRAY FAMILY

The Wars of the Roses ended by the marriage of Henry VII with Elizabeth Plantagenet, cousin of Margaret Plantagenet, wife of Sir Richard Pole. Sir Reginald Bray was probably a friend of Geoffrey Pole. Both had risen to prominence in the household of Margaret Beaufort. Sir Reginald had been made knight banneret on Bosworth Field, and rendered valuable service to Henry VII in being the principal negotiator of this union between the rival houses of Lancaster and York. He was Treasurer of England under Bishop Alcock, the first Chancellor of Henry VII. In the Parliaments of those days the " Keepers of the King's Conscience " always addressed the House from a scriptural text. Their speeches were often wonderful orations, but the subject of the story was invariably a demand for more money.

The Chapel of the Order of the Garter at Windsor owes much to this owner of Harleyford and Wittington. He was appointed by Henry VII to succeed the Bishop of Salisbury as clerk of the works for the completion of St. George's Chapel. Sir Reginald was also a liberal contributor to the cost of the building ; his cognisance appears on several parts of the structure ; but he did not live to see the work finished.

Sir Reginald Bray died in 1503 without issue, when his estates were willed to devolve, after the decease of his wife Catherine, upon a nephew, Edmund Bray,

who in 1529 was summoned to Parliament as Baron Bray of Eaton Bray. There are numerous conveyances of lands in Buckinghamshire to various people from Lord Bray, who squandered in profusion the patrimony he had inherited. He is described as " one of those nobles who with their pawned manors glistening on their backs followed King Henry to the field of golden folly " (*The Ancestor*, vi.).

THE BOLDS OF BOLD

A few years after the death of Sir Reginald Bray a claim for absolute possession of Wittington was set up by Margaret Sands, on the plea of inheritance from William Sands, sometime a trustee of the property. Edmund Bray tried to meet the difficulty by making a lease for lives to Margaret Sands, widow, and to another, of the " manor of Harleyford [in Medmenham]," viz. a messuage, 120 acres of land, 100 acres of meadow, 100 acres of pasture, 100 acres of wood, and a weir. Margaret died, but her partner, Tucher Bold, survived. He was one of the Bolds of Bold, a well-known family of the county of Lancaster. The same Tucher Bold received a new life grant from Edmund Bray in 1523, the year after the estates of Edmund had been confirmed to him by the feoffees under his uncle's will.

A similar fate befell the " manor of Harleyford in Great Marlow," where John Sands, another claimant of the above family, was in possession. The only evidence the claimant could produce was that his father and grandfather (William Sands) had enjoyed quiet possession. In the year 1529 Sir Edmund Bray disputed the title with John Sands. The problem was settled by Sir Edmund Bray and Tucher Bold buying out the claimant, and thus rounding off the Harleyford and Wittington estates. In that transaction Tucher Bold acquired only a life interest. Shortly afterwards

Lord Bray raised money on the whole of his lands in Medmenham, Harleyford, and Great Marlow, and finally he sold them outright to Tucher Bold.

> Easter in 3 weeks. 28 Henry VIII (1537).
> Between Tucher Bold, gentleman, querent, and Edmund Bray, knt., Lord Bray, deforciant, of the manor of Harleford with appurtenances and of 20 messuages, 1000 acres of land, 200 acres of meadow, 200 acres of pasture, 100 acres of wood, and 40*s*. rent in Harleford, Medmenham, Great and Little Marlow.
>
> *Feet of Fines* (Bucks), East. 28 Hen. VIII.

The above was to Tucher Bold " and his heirs for ever," and the consideration paid for the purchase was 800 marks of silver. It was a modest amount for an estate of 1500 acres, but the acreage was doubtless exaggerated, and the transaction took place just upon the dissolution of the monastic houses, when there was a glut of landed property on the market. Within a few years of this sale a licence was issued by John Bishop of Lincoln, 16th July 1542, to allow Tucher Bold to have a priest to officiate " in his chapel at Harlethorpe, within his manor there," on account of the distance from the parish church. Tucher Bold continued to live at Harleyford until the time of his death, when the property passed to his next of kin.

THE SALE TO MILES HOBART

Towards the close of the sixteenth century Francis Bold of Harleyford and Wittington died without issue, and his estate reverted to the main line of the family. The surviving relatives then disposed of the Buckinghamshire property to Miles Hobart, citizen and cloth worker of London.

> Between Miles Hubbard, querent, and Richard Bold of Bold and wife Jane, Richard Bold son and heir of Francis Bold,

John Bold and William Bold, deforciant, of the manor of Harleford with appurtenances and of 10 messuages 6 tofts a dovecote 10 gardens 10 orchards 400 acres of land 80 acres of meadow 300 acres of pasture 600 acres of wood and 100 acres of heath and furze in Harleford, Medmenham, Marlowe Magna and Marlowe Parva.

To Miles and his heirs for ever. Miles gave £600 sterling.

Feet of Fines (Bucks), East. 39 Eliz. (1597).

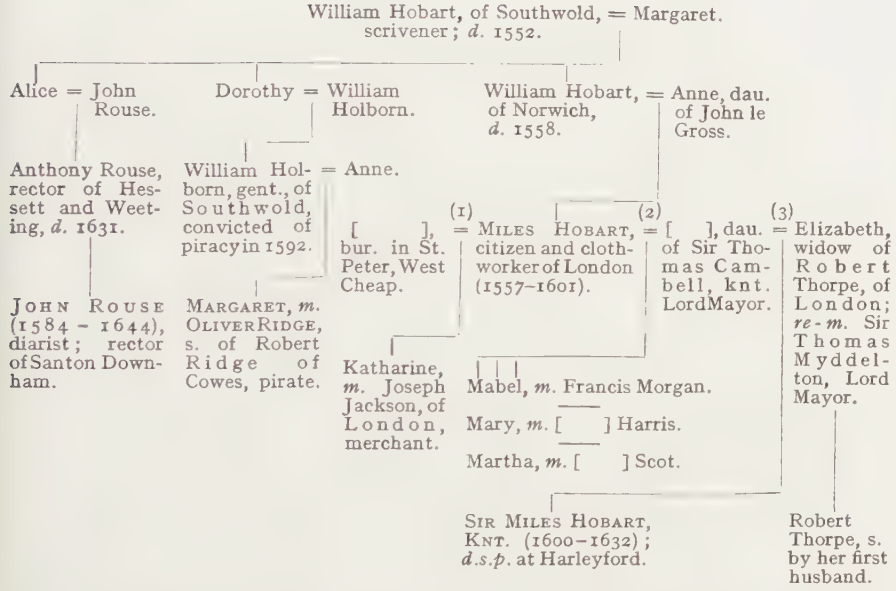
A brief pedigree of the Hobarts is necessary to understand the subtle process of events by which part of this estate subsequently came to the Crown, while the remainder was distributed in another direction. The family was distinguished in public life. Sir James Hobart, brother to William Hobart of Southwold, was Attorney-General to Henry VII. Miles Hobart, purchaser of Harleyford and Wittington, was following the custom of the day by investing in landed property the money he had accumulated from trading, but his interest was short lived. Within two years of the above conveyance Miles Hobart died, leaving a son less than two years old. During the minority of Miles Hobart the younger his mother Elizabeth administered the estates.

Inquisition at Chessam 19 Jan. 45 Elizabeth (1603) on Miles Hubard late citizen and cloth worker of London.

Jurors say that Miles Hubard was seised before his death of the manor or farm of Harleford with appurtenances in co. Bucks and also of 7 messuages, 600 acres of land, in Great and Little Marlow, Harleford and Medmenham acquired by him from Richard Bowlde Esquire and also of certain messuages (described) in London, and on 16 Sept. 43 Eliz. (1601) he made his will at London bequeathing the said manor and premises in Buckinghamshire to Miles Hubbard his son and to the heirs of his body, and the tenements in London to his wife Elizabeth during widowhood with remainder to the said Miles the son and the heirs of his body.

The manor of Harleford and all the other premises in co. Bucks were held of William Pagett Esquire as of the manor of Grt. Marlow (except 1½ ac. in Marlow, described) for fealty and rent of 27*s*. yearly.

HOBART OF SOUTHWOLD AND LONDON*


William Hobart, of Southwold, scrivener; d. 1552. = Margaret.
Alice = John Rouse.
Dorothy = William Holborn.
William Hobart, of Norwich, d. 1558. = Anne, dau. of John le Gross.
Anthony Rouse, rector of Hessett and Weeting, d. 1631.
William Holborn, gent., of Southwold, convicted of piracy in 1592. = Anne.
(1)
(2)
(3)
[ ], bur. in St. Peter, West Cheap. = Miles Hobart, citizen and clothworker of London (1557–1601). = [ ], dau. of Sir Thomas Campbell, knt. Lord Mayor. = Elizabeth, widow of Robert Thorpe, of London; re-m. Sir Thomas Myddelton, Lord Mayor.
John Rouse (1584–1644), diarist; rector of Santon Downham.
Margaret, m. Oliver Ridge, s. of Robert Ridge of Cowes, pirate.
Katharine, m. Joseph Jackson, of London, merchant.
Mabel, m. Francis Morgan.
Mary, m. [ ] Harris.
Martha, m. [ ] Scot.
Sir Miles Hobart, Knt. (1600–1632); d.s.p. at Harleyford.
Robert Thorpe, s. by her first husband.

* Based upon Chan. Inq. p.m. Eliz. 272, No. 5; Chas. I, 491, No. 30; and *Visitation of Norfolk* (Norf. Arch. Soc.), ii. 88. These evidences disprove the parentage of Anthony Rouse as given in the Introduction to the *Diary of John Rous* (Camden Society). Names in SMALL CAPITALS denote owners of an interest in Medmenham estates.

Table No. V.

Miles, the son and heir, is aged 3 years. Elizabeth, the widow, has taken the profits to date. Miles, the father, died 20 Sept. 43 Eliz. (1601).

Chancery Inquisition post mortem, Eliz., vol. 273, No. 75.

Elizabeth Hobart married again Sir Thomas Myddelton, who was chosen Lord Mayor of London on Michaelmas Day, 1613, the same day that his brother Sir Hugh Myddelton opened the New River Head. He was her third husband, and she was his third wife. Sir Thomas Myddelton, step-father of Miles Hobart, represented the City of London in Parliament from 1624 to 1626. Miles himself also entered upon a parliamentary career, and was soon created a knight for distinguished service.

Miles Hobart the younger is chiefly notorious for having locked the door of the House of Commons, and put the key in his pocket, whilst the Short Remonstrance of 1629 was being read. The Speaker was held down in the Chair, and in spite of the repeated knocking of the Usher at the door, summoning the Commons to the presence of Charles I in the Lords' Chamber, and amidst the storm of tumult within the House, the Commons declared whosoever introduced innovations in religion, or whatever minister advised a levy of illegal subsidies, to be "a capital enemy to the Kingdom and Commonwealth," and every subject obeying such illegal acts and demands "a betrayer of the liberty of England and an enemy of the same."

For his share in these proceedings Sir Miles Hobart was imprisoned in the Tower. He refused to give guarantee for loyal behaviour, but after a year or two he consented. Soon after his release he was fatally injured in a carriage accident on Holborn Hill. Sir Miles died at Harleyford, 20th June 1632, and was buried at Marlow, where a mural tablet was erected by Parliament in the parish church to his memory, consisting of a bust, while beneath is a coach and

THE OLD WINCH AT WITTINGTON

(*Looking towards the weir at New Lock*)

IN the undercliff gardens at Wittington, on the river bank, may still be seen the capstan winch formerly used to drag barges through the flash-lock across the weir. The feature is of unique interest, because the winch is the only surviving specimen of its kind on the Thames (*see* pp. 393–4).

To face p. 80.

four horses, with the wheel broken and without a coachman, representing the manner of his death.

After the decease of Sir Miles Hobart a dispute arose respecting the validity of his will. Letters of administration were granted, 26th June 1632, to Robert Thorpe, half-brother of Sir Miles, pending a suit between Robert Thorpe, Mabel Morgan, Mary Harris, and John Johnson on one side, and Sir John Hewett on the other. Sentence was pronounced, 11th July 1633, against the validity of the will, and Robert Thorpe was instructed to proceed as in case of intestacy. Upon the death of this trustee some four years later, powers of administration were granted to Mary Harris, widow, only surviving sister of Sir Miles Hobart.

WITTINGTON IN THE POSSESSION OF PIRATES

In the distribution of the real estate, Harleyford and Wittington fell in equal shares to Anthony Rouse, one of the coheirs, and to Oliver Ridge and his wife Margaret. Some doubt existed in the opinion of the country jurors, who made a return concerning the lands of Sir Miles Hobart, as to whether Margaret was entitled to inherit because she was the daughter of a convicted pirate ; and the London jurors, who made a return as to the property of Sir Miles in the parish of St. Lawrence Jewry, swore that he died without heirs. The uncertainty of their legal position led the " pretended " (i.e. supposed) coheirs of one moiety to make composition with the Crown for the Wittington estate :

> Morrow of the Purification. 9 Chas. I.
> (i.e. 3 Feb. 1633–4).
> Between the King, querent, and Oliver Ridge and his wife Margaret, deforciant, of the moiety of a cottage, 123 acres land, 52 acres of meadow, 53 acres of pasture, and of 205 acres of wood in Medmenham.

Quitclaim from Oliver and Margaret and the heirs of Margaret to the King his heirs and successors. Warranty against the heirs of Margaret.
The King gave Oliver and Margaret £100.
Feet of Fines (Bucks), Hil. 9 Chas. I.

During the reign of Elizabeth the English Channel swarmed with pirates—sea-dogs as they were called. The very port officers of the Crown made a profit on the spoil, and many gentlemen of England had an interest in the business. The rewards were rich, but the risks were great. Oliver himself was the son of Robert Ridge of Cowes in the Isle of Wight, who was convicted of piracy near the " Island of Bayon " (10th September 1629). William Holborn, the father of Margaret, was another free-lance of the high seas, but he had fallen in the world before he embarked on his last adventure, for he shipped as skipper of the crew. The latter " made spoil " of three British merchant ships in the Bristol Channel—a sad error of discrimination. For this offence he was brought before the High Court of Admiralty in Southwark, 19th October 1592, when " the said William Holborne was convicted . . . and died that same day."

Sir Richard Lovelace of Ladye Place, Hurley, one of the brothers-in-arms of Sir Francis Drake, is a notable near example of the successful pirate. He achieved fame by plundering the West Indian fleet of the King of Spain, and incidentally founded the family fortune. Even after he retired to a respectable life the old spirit of the buccaneer was never extinguished. The death of Sir Miles Hobart, and a dispute concerning his will, afforded a golden opportunity. The inquisition taken at Colnebrook after Sir Miles' decease concluded with these significant words :

Richard Lord Lovelace has occupied the manor of Harleford and the lands etc. in Harleford Marlow and Medmenham from the death of Sir Miles Hobart until the taking of the

inquisition, and has taken the profits, by what authority the jurors do not know.

Chancery Inquisition post mortem, Chas. I, vol. 491, No. 30.

There is something intensely fascinating in the bright picture of this ancient mariner, calmly forestalling the executors, and diligently looting the property of his deceased neighbour.

DIVISION OF HOBART ESTATE

The titles of the coheirs to the Hobart estates were so shaky on the piracy question that the final settlement was by way of a compromise. The London property was all delivered up to the Crown. Oliver and Margaret Ridge received from the Crown a life grant of a moiety of Harleyford, which they disposed of in 1634 to Roger Daniel for £320. Four years later the freehold of this moiety was acquired by William, Lord Paget, who had just purchased the second portion from other coheirs.

The one moiety of Wittington had been surrendered by Oliver and Margaret Ridge to the Crown; the other was held by John Rouse, who was buried in 1644 at Santon Downham. His trustees sold for £1200 all that moiety of manors, messuages, lands, etc., in Medmenham of which John Rouse was found heir on the death of Sir Miles Hobart, and this moiety of the estate afterwards became Danesfield.

FOUNDING OF OXFORD FELLOWSHIPS

At the instigation of Archbishop Laud, the Hobart property in St. Lawrence, Old Jewry, as well as the Ridge moiety of the Medmenham lands, was given by the Crown in 1635 to endow Fellowships or Scholarships in Exeter, Jesus, and Pembroke Colleges, Oxford, according to the following terms. The indenture confirming these benefactions was verified by the public seal of the University on 2nd July 1635.

The King moved by piety and pious zeal towards God, and towards true knowledge and the holy worship of His Name, and out of love for the propagation of the holy Gospel and to promote good learning for the service of religion throughout his realms and territories grants to the Chancellor Masters and Scholars of the University of Oxford and to their successors (1) all and singular the seven messuages and 2 gardens in St. Lawrence, Old Jewry late of Miles Hobart knt, deceased and escheat to the Crown because Miles died without heirs as appears by Chancery Inquisition taken in London. And Anthony Rouse one of the co-heirs, pretended, of Miles released his rights by deed enrolled in Chancery ; and Oliver Ridge and his wife Margaret the other pretended co-heir of Miles, released their rights by fine in the court " de Banco." (2) And also that moiety of a cottage 123 acres of land 52 ac. meadow 53 acres of pasture and 205 acres of wood in Medmenham co. Bucks which were of the said Miles and came to the Crown as escheat since Miles (who held the whole of the said tenements and other premises of the Crown) died without heirs, by fine levied by Oliver and Margaret.

To hold . . . as to the moiety of the cottage and lands in Medmenham of the King his heirs and successors as of the manor of East Greenwich by fealty in free and common socage paying 6*s*. 8*d*. yearly into the Exchequer yearly.

To the intent that the Chancellor Masters and Scholars should divide the profits into three equal portions to be distributed equally between (1) the Rector and Scholars of Exeter College (2) the Principal Fellows (*socii*) and Scholars of Jesus College and (3) the Master Fellows (*socii*) and Scholars of Pembroke College to the following uses :—

First, $\frac{1}{4}$ of each one third of the profits to go to the use of the several colleges.

Secondly, the remainder of each one third to be applied for the education and maintenance of three fellows (*socii*) or scholars of the several colleges in accordance with their statutes ; to come from and be chosen in the Islands of Jersey and Guernsey.

Thirdly, the fellows or scholars are to return to the several islands from which they came and to serve God there.

Fourthly, the first nomination is to be with the King.

Fifthly, if 2 are elected from Jersey and one from Guernsey, the next time 2 are to be from Guernsey and 1 from Jersey.

Etc., Etc., (minor ordinances).—17 June, 11 Chas. I, 1635.

Patent Roll, 11 Chas. I, Pt. 8, No. 10.

The name of Archbishop Laud in connection with the business is not without interest. He was the last of the great churchmen of England who rose to be first minister of the realm. A man of humble origin, the son of a Reading clothier, William Laud was born in a small house which formerly stood on the north side of Broad Street, Reading. He was sent to the Free School at Reading, then took his degree at St. John's College, Oxford. He afterwards became Dean of Gloucester 1616, Bishop of St. David's 1621, Bishop of London 1628, and Archbishop of Canterbury 1633. Like Wolsey he was the patron of learning, and like him too he encouraged the use of confiscated property for the endowment of colleges and schools where men were trained in the free intellectual atmosphere of Catholic theology.

Lady Periam, another great friend of learning about that time, to whom the estate of Yewden then belonged, died 3rd May 1621, leaving property for a similar purpose. She was successively the wife of Sir Robert D'Oyley, Sir Henry Neville, and Sir William Periam, Bart. Borough Farm, on the borders of Hambleden and Medmenham, being part of the jointure of Lady Periam, and extending to 202 acres, was bequeathed by her upon trust to be bestowed by Bishop Laud upon such colleges in Oxford as he might think proper ; and therewith were founded two scholarships in Balliol College, with preference to Lady Periam's Grammar School in Henley or to native boys of Buckinghamshire.

THE REVOLUTIONARY OF WITTINGTON

When Oliver and Margaret Ridge delivered up to the Crown their moiety of the Wittington lands, they also received back a lease of the lands in survivorship, paying £3 6*s*. 8*d*. yearly, with the grant of a further lease to William Pennington and Roger Daniel

at the same rent for twenty-one years from the death of Oliver and Margaret. The latter must have acquired the interest of Pennington and Daniel, because in 1638 Thomas Hampson purchased from Oliver and Margaret the leasehold for their lives and for twenty-one years afterwards. The disaffections of the Civil War within ten years of the first grant provided Thomas Hampson with an excuse for the non-payment of rent, which was then due to the University.

The City of Oxford was the principal garrison of the Royalist party. It gave the King a sweeping command over the Midland counties, but after the victory of Cromwell at the battle of Naseby, 14th June 1645, the City of Oxford was obliged to sue for terms of truce. While the landlords of Wittington were devoted Royalists, the lessee declared himself a zealous revolutionary. He steadfastly refused to pay his rent into the enemy's camp, but he appears to have gladly contributed to the levy of Medmenham for the support of the Parliamentarian Army.

Upon the surrender of Oxford to the Parliament forces the University appealed to the Committee of Lords and Commons sitting at Westminster, where justice was still administered in the name of a fugitive monarch, and judgment was delivered in the following terms :

> 19th January 1646–7.
> Upon humble petition of the Chancellor Masters and Scholars of the University of Oxford showing that divers of ye tenants holding lands of ye said University for ye maintenance of ye Library and other publique uses do refuse to pay their rents and arrears of rentt due unto ye said University according to ye Articles of ye Treaty for ye surrender of Oxford. It is hereby declared by this Committee That all and every ye Tennants of ye said University ought according to ye articles of ye said Treaty to pay all such rents, etc.
>
> *State Papers Dom.* Chas. I, vol. 515, No 8. II.

A DEED OF PARTITION

While the petition of Oxford University was being considered at Westminster, the trustees of John Rouse parted with their moiety (13th December 1646) to Robert Huntingdon, merchant, of Yarmouth, and he again sold the same to William Powell, Old Windsor, Berks. A number of years had elapsed since the death of Sir Miles Hobart, but there had been no actual division of his Wittington estate. Any dealings during that time were merely in the matter of ownership. There was no partition of the land until 22nd September 1652, when two separate estates were formed out of Wittington. The line of demarcation between the respective properties was decided upon by William Powell of the one part, and Thomas Hampson of the other, and their agreement was incorporated in a deed of partition, which cannot now be traced. Thomas Hampson retained the present Wittington estate, and William Powell received the land that he subsequently sold to Edmond Medlycott, which eventually became Danesfield.

The tenant of Wittington towards the close of the seventeenth century was William Blundell, who was churchwarden of Medmenham in 1691, when the treble bell was cast. His name appears on the bell. The same William Blundell in 1719 was churchwarden of Great Marlow, and his name is there recorded on the seventh bell. He lies buried outside the east end of Medmenham church, where a tombstone announces that he died 17th December 1725, aged 76.

When Thomas Langley wrote some seventy years later Wittington lands were leased to Sir William Clayton, Bart., who paid to Oxford University a rent of £20 per annum. At that time George Pengree was in residence at " Whitenton Farm," and John Gould at New Lock. The latter had been appointed first

keeper at 5*s*. 6*d*. a week of the new pound lock, opened in 1773 by the Thames Commissioners, on the Hurley side of the stream. When the Tithe Commutation of Medmenham was completed in 1842 Wittington was still in the occupation of the Clayton family, but a few years later the estate was leased to Charles Robert Scott Murray of Danesfield.

THE VISCOUNT DEVONPORT OF WITTINGTON

In the year 1897 the University of Oxford decided to realise the value of the property. The Wittington estate was offered for sale, and it passed into the possession of Mr. Hudson Ewbanke Kearley, of Grosvenor Place, Westminster, and States, Medmenham. Mr. Hudson Kearley entered Parliament in 1892 at the age of thirty-five, and for nearly twenty years (1892–1910) he represented the borough of Devonport. In 1905 he became a member of the Government under the Premiership of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, holding the position of Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade, in which office his immediate chief and President was Mr. David Lloyd George, afterwards Prime Minister. When the Port of London Authority was created by statute in 1909 Sir Hudson Kearley was first Chairman of the Board. In December 1916 he was appointed Food Controller, and as the first to hold the office organised the working of the new department. Mr. Hudson Kearley was created a Baronet in 1908, Privy Councillor in 1909, first Baron Devonport of Wittington, Bucks, 1910, and in 1917 the first Viscount Devonport.

The original title-deeds granted to the University make it plain that a moiety of the " right, title, claim, interest, and demand " associated with the Lenthall third of the manor of Medmenham is vested in the owner of Wittington ; also that the estate is held of " the King, his heirs and successors . . . by fealty

in free and common socage." The title has certainly lost much of its ancient significance, and holders of fiefs no longer collect their pleas and perquisites, but the feoffee still renders his fealty to the Crown, which a democratic age has magnified from a simple 6*s.* 8*d.* yearly into an elaborate system of taxation and death duties. The farmhouse near to the Marlow Road, known to earlier generations as Wittington, was at the close of the nineteenth century remodelled, and additional cottages were built adjoining the farm buildings. A new residence was also erected on a site nearer the river, commanding extensive views over the surrounding country.

The present mansion, a solid structure of graceful proportions and Georgian in style, was planned in 1897 by Sir Reginald Blomfield, R.A., of New Court, Temple, E.C. In the first design it was much smaller than the present house. It was decided to make a considerable increase in the size of the building in 1909, then the house was practically redesigned, with the existing fabric as a nucleus. Additional wings were added, a new hall and staircase were formed, and the domestic part was rearranged and increased in size and accommodation. The whole of the entrance front, and most of the ground floor, belongs to the remodelling of 1909. The house, which is built of red brick, Ham Hill stone, and Westmorland slate, stands in a singularly beautiful position near the river. An inscription in the pediment over the main entrance announces that the first house was built in 1898, and that the work was enlarged in 1909.

A feature of considerable historical interest at Wittington is the dining-room chimney-piece. It was taken from the dining-room of Battersea Rise House, Clapham Common, when being demolished for building improvements. This house in the eighteenth century was the property of Henry Thornton, a West

India merchant devoted to good works. It was the birthplace of the London Missionary Society, the Church Missionary Society, and the British and Foreign Bible Society, and was connected with such names as John Venn, Rector of Clapham ; William Wilberforce, a brilliant Member of Parliament ; William Pitt, son of the Earl of Chatham and Prime Minister ; Charles Grant, of the East India Company ; and Zachary Macaulay, father of the historian, Lord Macaulay. The dining-room of Battersea Rise House is reputed to have welcomed nearly every Cabinet Minister from the latter part of the eighteenth century until the ministry of Sir Robert Peel.

Situated in one of the most beautiful reaches of the river, the gardens of Wittington have been wonderfully adapted to the natural formation of the land. When acquired by the present proprietor the estate was practically a derelict farm, most of it out of cultivation, and all of it in a neglected condition. Its transformation and development into one of the most remarkable gardens in the country is an achievement of which the owner has reason to be proud. The grounds surrounding the house extend to nearly seventy acres. The view from the upper terraces over the Thames Valley and the wooded slopes of Berkshire has few things to equal it anywhere, while the natural charm of the gardens, with fine herbaceous borders, rock gardens, remarkable collections of flowering shrubs and trees, creeper-covered chalk cliffs, undulating lands, and rippling streams, afford a concentration of beauty and design in a setting of essentially typical English scenery.

THE ANNALS OF WITTINGTON.

A.D.	
570 *circa*	Original settlement by Witting family (Saxons) near promontory fort.
880 *circa*	Wittington joined to Medmenham by a system of King Alfred, which grouped settlements into lordships for military service.
1066 *circa*	Part of lordship held by Wlstan, a thane of Edward the Confessor.
1086.	Wittington in possession of Hugh de Bolebec, as part of manor of Medmenham; descended until 1415 in same line of succession as the entire manor.
1100 *et seq.* to 1372.	Occasional glimpses in ancient deeds of de Wittington family.
1260.	William de la Lude and his successors occupied Wittington until about 1400.
1300.	John de la Lude of Wittington was first parliamentary burgess for Wycombe.
1415.	Division of lordship of Medmenham, in which Wittington was the portion of Margaret FitzAlan, widow of Sir Rowland Lenthall.
1445.	Geoffrey Pole purchased Lenthall third of Medmenham, and lived at Wittington until his decease.
1496.	Sir Richard Pole, K.G., of Bockmer, sold Wittington to Sir Reginald Bray (*d.* 1503).
1537.	Lord Edmund Bray sold Wittington and Harleyford to Tucher Bold.
1597.	Trustees of Francis Bold disposed of the above property to Miles Hobart.
1634.	One moiety of Wittington was acquired by the Crown on decease of Sir Miles Hobart; other moiety fell to John Rouse, cousin of Sir Miles Hobart.
1635.	The Crown moiety of Wittington was bestowed upon the University of Oxford at the instigation of Archbishop Laud.

1652. A deed of partition divided Wittington into two estates, by which the Rouse moiety afterwards became Danesfield.

1897. The University of Oxford sold their Wittington Estate to Hudson Kearley, Esq., M.P., afterwards first Viscount Devonport.

1898 *et seq.* The present mansion was erected and afterwards enlarged by Right Hon. Lord Devonport.

AN EARLY ENGLISH JUG OF GLAZED EARTHENWARE DISCOVERED AT WITTINGTON (*see* p. 61).

CHAPTER IV

BOCKMER

" The knights are dust,
And their good swords are rust,
Their souls are with the saints, we trust."

The Knight's Tomb

SAMUEL T. COLERIDGE (1772–1834)

CHAPTER IV

BOCKMER

NCIENT British origins are still traceable in the names of great natural objects, such as rivers and mountains. The Thames, Tamar, Severn, and Avon are examples of this class. But local names to designate villages and homesteads belong to a later order, and mostly find their terminology in the language of the Saxon invaders. Some of them were determined by the choice of a habitation, and of these Ashridge, Blackgrove, and Wood End are examples. Others again took their beginning largely from the personal or family names of the conquering race. Thus Buckingham was a settlement of the Buckings, the descendants of Bock or Buck, the name of the town being afterwards transferred to the surrounding shire. The same origin can also be traced in Buckden, Buckley, Bocking, Bockmer, and Buckland, which in Domesday is spelt Bocheland.

The natural conclusion would be to connect Bockmer with a settlement of the same Saxon family, and to suggest that its career as a separate property of that name dates probably from about the year 570, when the Anglo-Saxons poured down on this part of the country, and exterminated those already in possession of the land. In a language which for centuries possessed no fixed spelling there are variations in the name, as Broch, Bock, Boche, and Buckemere. The syllable *mer* or *mere*, meaning a boundary, which is also of Saxon origin, completes the designation of an historical place. According to this the name Bockmer finds its interpretation in an early settlement,

where some of the Bockings first staked out their family claim in a conquered territory.

Around this ancient habitation were clustered the few hovels of dependents who lived by their manual labour on the land. These dwellings formed the "endship" of Broch, and the district is still known as Bockmer End. One feature of this part of the country is the frequency with which the same termination abounds. Wood End, Lane End, Cadmore End, Bourne End, and Mill End are all examples of the same class. The endship was a hamlet or small suburb, but the term is now obsolete. Like certain other words it has survived to provoke inquiry, because the termination "end" is mostly found in places which never seem to possess any noticeable beginnings.

THE HOMESTEAD OF ODO

When the Normans invaded the land, about five hundred years after the Saxon deluge, Bockmer (Broch) was in the occupation of one Odo, a tenant of Brictric, who himself was a man of Queen Edith. Domesday Survey remarked: "Odo . . . held this land and could sell it." This description implies that Odo held the land as it were in perpetual leasehold, rendering feudal service to Brictric, but that he had power to dispose of his proprietary rights. The extent of the territory of "Broch" was then one hide, which was 120 Domesday acres; and there were a villein and two bordars settled on the land. The villein and bordars were the actual farmers of the land; they enjoyed traditional rights on certain portions of the estate, and in return for the same they rendered service to Odo by cultivating the home farm and ministering to the requirements of his household.

Reg: Cardinal polus. Leg

REGINALD POLE OF BOCKMER

(*Born* 1500 ; *educated in a Carthusian Monastery at Sheen and at Oxford University ; Cardinal of Rome*, 1536 ; *Papal Legate to England*, 1554 ; *Archbishop of Canterbury*, 1555–58)

AS a young man Reginald Pole was considered a favourable suitor for the hand of Princess Mary, afterwards Queen of England, but his passion for Italy prevailed. For more than twenty years he was an exile from England. The man who had the most influence upon the destiny of Reginald Pole, next after Henry VIII and Mary Tudor, was the Emperor Charles V. of the Netherlands, whose memory is perpetuated in a stone chimney-piece at Danesfield (*see* p. 151).

To face p. 97.

RESTORATION BY GEOFFREY POLE

BOCKMER IN THE DARK AGES

After the redistribution of land which followed upon the Norman Conquest, many holdings were grouped into a single unit. Hugh de Bolebec possessed ten holdings in Buckinghamshire besides his estates elsewhere, and Bockmer was apparently absorbed into his larger holding of Medmenham. His residence at each holding could have been no more than occasional. The administration of each estate was left to the reeve or bailiff, who represented the lord in his absence, received the rents on his behalf, and accounted to him as steward of the manor. For two hundred years after Domesday the house at Bockmer was occupied by people of whom very small traces remain. In 1286 Thomas de Bockmere served on the jury of inquisition after the decease of William de Warenne. The house afterwards appears to have been let to successive tenants as part of the manor. Ralph de Cobham, who died in 1326, held a lease of the manor for life at £40 a year. At the close of that century Bartholomew Colrugg held a similar lease at the same rent from the Earl of Arundel.

Some years later, when the severed parts of the manor of Medmenham passed successively into the hands of Geoffrey Pole, the house at Bockmer was in a ruinous condition, although probably still habitable. A valuation made about 1422–61 represented that there were within the manor of Medmenham five ruined and decayed messuages worth nothing beyond their expenses. It would seem, therefore, that Geoffrey Pole extensively restored Bockmer, or probably rebuilt it. He certainly did much in all directions to improve the property he had purchased. The occasional discovery at Bockmer of buried heaps of roofing tiles of the thirteenth or fourteenth century confirms this impression, while recorded history

provides evidence that subsequent generations of the Pole family forsook Wittington and established themselves at Bockmer.

FORTUNES OF THE POLE FAMILY

Sir Richard Pole, who made his home at Bockmer, was elder son of Geoffrey Pole of Wittington, and Squire of the Bodyguard to Henry VII. He held important offices in the country of his ancestry, where he was Constable of Harlech and Montgomery Castles, Sheriff of Merioneth, and Chief Governor of the Marches. His courtly manner, sweetness of disposition, and military capacity won great favour with the King, who created him Knight of the Garter, and appointed him Chief Gentleman of the Bedchamber and Governor to his eldest son, Prince Arthur of Wales. As a further mark of distinction, Henry VII in 1494 bestowed upon him in marriage Lady Margaret Plantagenet, daughter of George, Duke of Clarence. This Duke of Clarence was fifth son of the Duke of York, by Isabel, daughter of Richard Neville, Earl of Westmorland.

In Margaret Plantagenet the squire of Medmenham possessed a wife aptly described as the "prudent woman, whose household is clothed in scarlet, whose price is far above rubies." The wily monarch by such a marriage not only rewarded Sir Richard Pole for his services, but he partly extinguished the rival claim of the Plantagenets to the throne by disposing of the next in blood of that family to a husband of unambitious temper and proved fidelity. The children of the marriage were Henry, afterwards Lord Montacute and Monthermer; Arthur, who lies buried in Medmenham Church; Reginald, sometime Cardinal and Archbishop; Geoffrey; and two daughters.

Sir Richard Pole in 1495 raised troops against Perkin Warbeck, an amazing impostor and leader of

insurrection, who personated the Duke of York, one of the Princes murdered in the Tower. The event is of passing interest through the fact that Lady Margaret Pole was cousin to the murdered children. Sir Richard died in 1505, leaving his wife as sole guardian of their young children, the eldest being only just ten years of age.

The life of Lady Margaret was deeply marked with tragic events. During the reign of Henry VII she lost both father and mother by the executioner, the latter only a short time before the birth of her third son Reginald. At first Henry VIII appeared anxious to undo these injuries as far as possible. One of his first acts was to bestow upon Lady Margaret £100 a year, equivalent to about £2000 a year of present currency. In 1512 the King also contributed £12 a year for the education of her son Reginald. The following year he created her Countess of Salisbury by her deceased brother's second title, and restored to her the family lands of the earldom of Warwick.

The bounty of Henry VIII to his first cousin extended also to her children. Upon her eldest son Henry he showered repeated marks of royal favour. During the French campaign, 25th September 1513, he created him knight in the church at Tournay, and the same year Sir Henry was made Baron Montacute. In 1520 Henry, Lord Montacute, married Jane Neville, second daughter of George, third Baron of Abergavenny. The children of this marriage were Katherine, who married Francis, Earl of Huntingdon, and Winifred, who became the wife of Sir Thomas Barrington.

While the family estate of the Poles became more magnificent, the generosity of Henry VIII was considerably discounted through the claim of the Crown for redemption money. An acknowledgment of £1000 appears by Cardinal Wolsey, the King's almoner,

being " part payment of 5000 marks granted [by the Countess of Salisbury] of her benevolence towards the King's wars . . . for his high and great goodness in restoring her to the inheritance of her said brother."

The same system of appropriation operating in other directions provided the means for educating the children of any expensive family possessing influence at Court. Pensions in ever-increasing number were charged upon monastic lands, and ecclesiastical preferments were bestowed in response to requests which were impossible to refuse. The State Papers of Henry VIII abound in entries of which this is just a specimen :

> 8th June 1513. For Reynold Pole, student in the University of Oxford, Pension which the newly-elected Prior of St. Frideswide's is bound to give to a Clerk of the King's nomination until he is promoted to a competent benefice by the said Prior.
>
> *Letters and Papers*, Hen. VIII., I. 2055 (35).

Four years later, at the age of seventeen, Reginald Pole was appointed to the prebendal stall of Ruscombe, at eighteen he became also Dean of Wimborne Minster, and at nineteen he added to these the prebendal stall of Gatcombe Secunda, all in Salisbury Diocese. He was then regarded as an outstanding candidate for the hand of Princess Mary, afterwards Queen of England.

In the year 1516 his sister, Ursula Pole, made the greatest match in England by marrying Lord Stafford, son and heir of Edward Bohun, Duke of Buckingham, and for about ten years afterwards the prosperity of the family remained at its zenith.

THE ATTAINDER OF REGINALD POLE

The first appearance of a cloud arose over the divorce proceedings of Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon, in which the Poles were prominently concerned. In 1530 Reginald Pole was offered the

Archbishopric of York, or the Bishopric of Winchester, to support the petition of Henry VIII, but he refused both preferments. His own people urged him not to resist the King's will. His brother, Sir Geoffrey Pole, had recently been created knight by the King, and had married Constance, daughter and heir of Sir John Packenham, by whom be became possessor of a considerable estate in Sussex. The fate of the family seemed to depend upon the influence of Reginald, the younger son.

Early in 1532 Reginald Pole took refuge in Italy, where he bitterly attacked the King in a book on the Unity of the Church. The messenger sent to convey a copy of the work to Henry VIII returned to Verona with a cordial greeting and a courteous invitation from the King to visit England, but Reginald had the sense to realise that, after what he had written, no author who had accused Henry VIII of being worse than an infidel and more inhuman than a Turk was safe in this country. The correspondence which followed resulted in Reginald Pole, who had recently been created Cardinal of Rome (22nd May 1536), persuading the Pope to execute against Henry VIII a bull of excommunication and deposition, which was actually launched, but was never read in England.

Thomas Cromwell, a man trained in the most unscrupulous school the world contained, and at that time Chief Minister of Henry VIII, was quick with his reply. In 1537 the King declared Reginald Pole a traitor, and fixed upon his head a price of 50,000 crowns. Cromwell at once arrested the entire Pole family, as well as Sir Edward Neville and Henry Courtenay, Marquess of Exeter, both kinsmen of the Poles, and, like them, of Royal blood. It was a period of unfettered tyranny and arbitrary punishment in which the constitutional safeguards of English freedom were swept away.

No complete account of the trial exists, because the State Papers of those years have been damaged. Lord Montacute, eldest brother of Reginald Pole and lord of Medmenham Manor, was in 1538 convicted of treason, and the following year was beheaded with the Marquess of Exeter on Tower Hill. The family estates, including the manors of Medmenham and Ellesborough, then escheated to the Crown.

Sir Geoffrey Pole was also indicted " for words spoken to Lord Montacute at Medmenham, co. Bucks, 31st May 1537," but history does not repeat the words. All they could discover from him in examination was that he " liked well " the proceedings of his brother Reginald, and that he wished " for a change of this world without meaning any hurt to the King." After a period of imprisonment Sir Geoffrey was released, and on 4th January 1539 he received the King's free pardon.

At the same time their mother, the aged Countess of Salisbury, was also attainted of treason, and sent to the Tower, where in 1541 she was beheaded. The Countess lies buried at Bisham Abbey, near her husband, Sir Richard Pole, where their arms still appear in the oriel window of the Council Room, viz. :

> Party per pale or and sable a saltire engrailed counter-changed : impaling 1. Quarterly, France and England : 2. Neville : 3. Beauchamp : 4. Newburgh : 5. Montague : 6. Monthermer : 7. Quarterly, Clare and Despenser.

Among the examinations of the Montacute trial is the indictment of John Colyns, late of Medmenham, co. Bucks, clerk, otherwise of London, " who said to Lord Montacute, a wicked traitor at Medmenham, 21st May 1537 (29 Henry VIII), ' The kyng will hang in hell one day for the plukkyng down of abbeys.' " The same John Colyns was domestic chaplain to Lord Montacute, and the conversation was alleged to have taken place at Bockmer. Although John Colyns was

something of a firebrand, he was prepared in a tight corner, like many modern preachers of sedition, to eat his own words. At the trial he certainly accomplished this with considerable alacrity. One item in the case against him was " that thys last somer he delyuered a cofer of hys sermons and other wrytyngs to the Vycar of Meddenham, and after the takyng of the lord Montague he commanded the sayd Vycar that yf he weare imprysoned that then he shold burn theym." When John Colyns was examined about " the contentes of the writtynges delyuered to the Vycar of Medmenham and wherfore he comaunded the said writtynges to be burned . . . awnswereth bycause in one sermon there preached by this deponent att Chichester before the statute was made for the belisshment of the bysshopp of Romes authorytie certeyn thinges ware written for the mayntennces of his prerogative and authoritie. And he saith there was no other cause that moved hym to have theym burned."

The Pole family occupied a large place in local history. During the quarrels between Henry VIII and the Pope the family fortunes had suffered shipwreck. Under Queen Mary the attainder against Cardinal Pole was reversed in November 1554. A few days later the Privy Council sent two of their members to escort Reginald Pole to England, the selected delegates being Lord Paget, to whom the manor of Marlow had been granted, and Sir Edward Hastings, Her Majesty's Chamberlain, " beloved kinsman " of Reginald Pole.

THE DESCENT OF BOCKMER

The unique interest about Bockmer, not shared with any other principal residence in the parish, is that since the Conquest it has always been held directly by the family possessing the manor of Medmenham. The proprietary rights in Medmenham

Abbey were granted out to the Cistercians. Wittington and Danesfield have had a separate entity ever since they were severed from the rest of the manor in the fifteenth century. Le Rood House, now the Manor House, was the property of the Duffields, who held no manorial rights. Even the ancient Castle of Bolebec, and States, do not follow their traditional line of ownership. But Bockmer remains now where it was in Domesday, the one portion of the manor held continuously by the principal owner of Medmenham. We are given no insight into the departure of the Pole family, and not much of the time intervening until the arrival of William Rice. But for more than two centuries after the death of Geoffrey Pole, Bockmer was the home of each succeeding family which held the lordship of Medmenham.

WILLIAM AND BARBARA RICE

A new order of events began when the manor of Medmenham escheated to the Crown after the execution of Sir Thomas Palmer. It was then granted to William Rice and his wife Barbara, of whom very little is known beyond the fact that they made their home at Bockmer.

> Inq. taken at Chepinge Wycombe, 22. Sept. 38 Eliz. (1596) on William Rice Esquire.
> Queen Mary was seised of the Manor of Medmenham and by letters patent 7 Nov. 1 Mary (1553) granted the same to William Ryce and his then wife Barbara, with all the appurtenances, late parcel of the possessions of Sir Thomas Palmer Knt, for their lives in survivorship. And by letters patent 29 Dec. 1 Mary (1553) the Queen granted the reversion of the same to William and Barbara and the heirs and assigns of William.
> *Chancery Inquisition post mortem*, Eliz., vol. 246, No. 107.

While the manor of Medmenham was possessed by William Rice and Barbara his wife, James Duffield acquired from them certain lands, more particularly :

A messuage in Medmenham called Bulbankes, another messuage called le Roodhouse, alias Reedhouse Kitchen ; a meadow in Medmenham called Pretty Meadow, a meadow called Fleggy Close, and diverse several fields closes and woods or woody lands in Medmenham called le Axeclose, Stoneclose, Stertes, Bery Deane, alias Beridowne, Welles Croft alias Wells Crofte, and Salingrove . . . late parcel of the manor of Medmenham and acquired by exchange from William Rice by indenture 20 Nov. 19 Eliz. (1576).

A capital messuage called Woodend Farme and a messuage called Blackmere in Medmenham, and 2½ acres in Charlemeade, 1½ acres of arable land in le Common Hill, and diverse lands, closes and woods in Medmenham and Hambledon called Holmefeilde, Southfeilde, Cockfeilde, Cock's Garden . . . Newlands and Lewen's Grove and 1½ acres arable land in Medmenham . . . paying to Ryse and his heirs 48*s.* 2*d.* yearly.

Duffield Deed, dated 6 April 26 Eliz. (1584).

The source of the first information does not specify what lands James Duffield gave in exchange, but it indicates that at the time Bolebec Castle was more than a ruin, for it describes it as a messuage. It also furnishes evidence that the Rood House was the ancient name of the place "where Robert Redinge junior formerly dwelt in Medmenham," which is now known as the "Manor House" (v. *Chancery Inquisition post mortem* Eliz., vol. 208, No. 179 ; also Jas. 1, vol. 329, No. 194). Wood End Farm, named in the second indenture, was the new farmhouse at Hollywick, which stood at some distance from the older habitation, but farmed the same land.

The succession to the manor of Medmenham as it remained at his decease was settled by an indenture which accompanied the will of William Rice. The latter made a few dispositions to his wife, Richard Dodson, Robert Shipwash, and the testator's sisters ; he also bequeathed "£5 to the poor to be distributed at the burial" ; and left his servants "to the consideration of myne executors to be used as in good conscience and reason by them shalbe thoughte

meete." With regard to his real estate he made this provision :

> And as touchinge my manor of Medmenham and other my landes tenements and hereditamentes whatsoever whearof I am now presently seased, I will and my full intent and meaninge is that the same shalbe and remaine to suche person and persons to suche use and uses and in suche serte manner and forme as are limitted and conteyned in one indenture bearinge the date of this my present last will.
>
> *P.C.C.* 10, Leicester.

William Rice died 29th August 1588 without issue, leaving the disposal of the manor of Medmenham to be decided according to the order of succession set out in the following documents :

> By indenture, 22 July 30 Eliz. (1588) between (1) the same William and Barbara, styled William Ryce of Bockmere in the parish of Medmenham co. Bucks and his wife Barbara and (2) Robert Scrope of Hambledon co. Bucks Esquire and Robt. Saunders of Hambledon, in consideration of the natural love and affection which William and Barbara bore to William Ryce, heir apparent to William, viz. son and heir of Robert Ryce deceased brother of the said William, and to Elizabeth Ryce, Anne Ryce and Margaret Ryce, sisters on the father's side of the said William Ryce Esquire it was agreed that the manor should stand successively :—
>
> (1) to the use of William Ryce Esquire and Barbara for their lives ;
> (2) to the use of the will of Wm. Ryce and payment of his debts ;
> (3) to the use of Elizabeth Anne and Margaret during the minority of William Ryce the heir, or of the heir of his body, for 21 years after the deaths of William and Barbara or the survivor of them ;
> (4) to William Ryce the nephew for life ;
> (5) to the issue male of William Ryce (the nephew) successively ;
> (6) to any daughters of William the nephew ;
> (7) to the said Elizabeth Anne and Margaret Ryce and their heirs ;
> (8) to Anne Fuller and Mary Fuller neices of Barbara, and their issue ; and
> (9) to the right heirs of William Ryce Esquire.
>
> *Chancery Inquisition post mortem*, Eliz., vol. 246, No. 107.

Barbara Rice, who survived her husband, and retained possession of the manor for life, afterwards married Edmund Burgoyne, and in 1593 she disposed of her life interest to John Hyde, gentleman, while she was living at East Greenwich, Kent.

> Final Concord Easter in 15 days 35 Eliz. (1593) between Edmund Burgoyne and his wife Barbara querent, and John Hyde gent., deforciant, of the manor of Medmenham with 40 messuages 10 cottages 2 mills, 3 dovecotes 50 gardens 50 apple trees 700 ac. land 500 ac. meadow 500 ac. pasture 500 ac. wood 500 ac. gorse and heath 40*s.* rent. common of pasture for all cattle, free warren, free fishery for four miles in the water of the Thames, view of frankpledge, tolls, waifs and strays, with the appurtenances in Medmenham, Woodend and Buckmore and the advowson of the church of Medmenham.
>
> *Feet of Fines* (Bucks), East. 35 Eliz.

On the same day, and in precisely the same terms, Elizabeth and Anne, the surviving sisters of William Rice, disposed of all their reversionary rights in the manor of Medmenham to Anthony Ashley. Each of the vendors sold much more than she could possibly deliver, as well in land as in the advowson of the church, which belonged to Francis Duffield. It was a legitimate form of deception, an ingenious invention of lawyers, according to which estates were sold at a greatly exaggerated acreage, leaving the purchaser to make good his title to all the land or houses of which he could obtain possession.

John Hyde and Anthony Ashley, who in the documents quoted above acquired the manor of Medmenham from the successors of William Rice, appear to have been acting on behalf of John Borlase, or to have sold to him their rights in the manor, because within a few weeks of the above transaction John Borlase died the proprietor of Bockmer, and possessor also of the manor of Medmenham. The family name had many forms of spelling : Burlacy, Burlace, Burlacie, and Borlase.

THE ORIGIN OF JOHN BORLASE

The first connection of this Cornish family with Buckinghamshire arose through Edward Borlase, a younger son of John Borlase of Borlase in Cornwall, and a direct descendant of the Taillefer family of Cornwall. They traced its origin to one Talfer, to whom William II had granted certain lands in Cornwall. Edward made his way to London, was admitted free of the Mercers' Company in 1514, supplied wine for the festivities of the Field of the Cloth of Gold, and had a country residence called Periwinkles in Middleton and Sittingbourne, Kent. He had a taste for widows as well as for wine, because he married three of them in turn, and all with children of their own. The first was Parnell (Petronilla), widow of Thomas Ramsey of Hitcham, and daughter of Sir John Baldwyn, Kt., Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas. The child of this marriage was John Borlase II. Thomas Ramsey had died in possession of considerable lands in Hitcham and Little Marlow, which were afterwards farmed to Petronilla by the trustees for the rent of a red rose. These circumstances first introduced Edward Borlase to Buckinghamshire.

John Borlase II, eldest son of Edward, employed the fortune left him by his parents in the purchase of the manor of Stratton Audley, Oxon, as well as the manors of Medmenham and of Davers in Little Marlow, Bucks. He was Sheriff for Buckinghamshire for the year 1567–68, having been unsuccessful in his efforts to avoid so costly an office. Lady Elizabeth Hoby, of Bisham, wrote on 8th November 1567 to Sir William Cecil that Borlase had requested her to solicit that the shrievalty of Buckinghamshire should be bestowed on Mr. Edmund Ashfield, or some other person more able to bear the charges thereof than himself. In 1586 he was

BORLASE OF BOCKMER AND LITTLE MARLOW *

ARMS: Erm., on a bend sable, two hands and arms issuing out of the clouds at the elbows, all proper, rending a horse-shoe or. Crest: a wolf passant regardant arg., struck in the shoulder, with an arrow held in his mouth.

John Borlase I, of Borlase in Cornwall; *d.* young.

Edward Borlase, citizen and mercer of London; *d.* 1544; *m.* three times.

(1) = Parnell, dau. of Sir John Baldwyn, Lord Chief Justice of Common Pleas, widow of Thomas Ramsey of Hitcham; owned land in Little Marlow.

Walter Borlase, of St. Newlyn.

JOHN BORLASE II, of Little Marlow; sheriff of Bucks; M.P. for Bucks; bur. at Marlow, 1593. = Anne, dau. and coheir of Sir Robert Litton, of Knebworth; bur. at Little Marlow, 1622.

Elizabeth Ramsey, dau. by her first husband.

SIR WILLIAM BORLASE I, Knt., barrister; M.P. for Aylesbury and Wycombe; *d.* at Bockmer, 1628; bur. at Little Marlow; founder of the Borlase School. = Mary, dau. of Nicholas Backhouse, of London; *d.* 1625.

Elizabeth, *m.* Samuel Backhouse, of London and Bockmer.

Henry Borlase, M.P. for Aylesbury and Marlow; *d.v.p.*

SIR WILLIAM BORLASE II, Knt., of Marlow and Bockmer; *d.* at Bockmer, 1630. = Amy, dau. of Sir Francis Popham.

SIR JOHN BORLASE III, cr. a baronet, 1642; *d.* 1672. = Alice, elder dau. of Sir John Bankes; *d.* in Paris, 1683; aged 62.

ANNE; bur. at Stapleford, 1703. = ARTHUR WARREN, of Stapleford Hall, "Old Squire Warren"; *d.* 1697.

SIR JOHN BORLASE IV, Bt., M.P. for Marlow; *d.* 1689, *s.p.*

Baldwin Borlase, of Bockmer; bur. at Stratton Audley.

BORLASE WARREN, of Stapleford (1677–1747).

JOHN BORLASE WARREN (1699–1763); M.P. for Nottingham; bur. at Stapleford.

ADMIRAL SIR JOHN BORLASE WARREN, Bt., K.B. (1753–1822); bur. at Stratton Audley.

* Based upon *Borlase of Borlase*, by W. Copeland Borlase, and the evidences cited in the text.
Names in SMALL CAPITALS denote lords of Medmenham Manor.

Table No. VI.

parliamentary burgess for the county of Buckingham. In 1588 he was again sheriff. From his mother John inherited the manor of Ludgershall, and on his marriage to Anne, daughter and coheir of Sir Robert Litton, of Knebworth, Herts, he also acquired other landed estates. By a curious coincidence the manor of Ludgershall, like that of Medmenham, had belonged to Sir Thomas Palmer, who lost his life and belongings through his political intrigues; but the Ludgershall property had afterwards been purchased from the Crown by Sir John Baldwyn, Kt., of Aylesbury, instead of passing to William Rice.

THE HOME AT BOCKMER

One of the first enterprises of John Borlase II was to rebuild the Manor House at Bockmer, but before the work could be started his death changed the family circumstances. Sir William Borlase I, heir of the estates, still proceeded with the building, but when completed Bockmer House became for some years the residence of Samuel Backhouse, who about 1581 had married Elizabeth, sister of Sir William Borlase. The latter had also taken to wife Mary, daughter of Nicholas Backhouse, of London. Over the fireplace in what is now the drawing-room of Bockmer may still be seen the device of Samuel Backhouse.

The funeral certificate of John Borlase II at the College of Arms gives a vivid account of the pageantry which generally accompanied the burial of distinguished men, although in the following extract there is obviously some confusion about the date :

> He departed this life at London the 6 day of maye and was from thence conveyed to hys maner hows of danvers in marlowe aforesaid, and in the Parishe Churche was worshipfullye buried the VI day of May aforesaid a° d^i^ 1593 . . . . hys pennon of Armes borne by Wyllm borlas his brother, the helm and

> Crest borne by blew mantle, pursuyvante of Armes, hys Coote of Armes borne by Richard Lee, Richmond herald, deputy for Clarencieulex King of Armes, by whom the wholl service was finished.
>
> *Funeral Certificates*, Herald's College.

The house of the Borlase family at Bockmer was far more imposing than the building which now survives. It is referred to in old accounts as "of great extent," and as being "a very respectable mansion." Imagination is left to picture what such phrases may represent. No doubt the house was the most distinguished in the parish, but the general average of accommodation and comfort in country residences at that time cannot be compared with the same things to-day. Few of the old manor houses were of much more than moderate capacity. The average country gentleman of the seventeenth century seldom troubled himself about decorating his abode, but Bockmer was panelled with beautiful work, which is still one of its principal attractions. The Borlase family possessed more refinement than would have been found in most households, because they moved in political and court circles ; but the average country squire was unlettered, unenlightened, and unpolished; his chief serious employment was the care of his property, his pleasures were of the coarsest description, and his opinions concerning religion, government, and history were the opinions of a child. The Duffields of Medmenham Abbey belonged to the latter category, although they certainly lacked the innocence of children.

FOUNDATION OF BORLASE SCHOOL

Sir William Borlase I, son and heir of John Borlase II, chief mourner at his father's funeral, was by profession a barrister. He was admitted to Gray's Inn 1594, became Sheriff of Buckinghamshire 1601,

was parliamentary burgess for Aylesbury 1602, and in June 1603 was knighted by James I at Sir John Fortescue's place at Beddington, Surrey. As a knight's crest he bore a wolf passant pierced with an arrow. Sir William attained considerable eminence in the law ; his name frequently occurs in the State papers of the day. He was concerned in various disputes as to the title of forest lands in Buckinghamshire. As commissioner for levying forced loans in the county, Sir William protested, in 1627, against the heavy assessment of John Hampden, a young Buckinghamshire squire whose career of patriotism will be ever remembered. It was this gathering storm which resulted in that dramatic scene in the House of Commons, when the doors were locked, and the Speaker was held in the chair, while the Short Remonstrance was read, a proceeding for which Sir Miles Hobart was imprisoned. The same Sir William Borlase was an intimate friend of Ben Jonson, who succeeded Shakespeare as king of the stage. They addressed verses to one another, and Sir William, who was something of an artist, painted a picture of Ben Jonson.

After some years Samuel Backhouse retired to Swallowfield, Berks, where his wife died, and Bockmer became the residence of Sir William Borlase II, whose wife was Amy, daughter of Sir F. Popham, of Littlecote, Wilts. Their child Ann, born at Littlecote, was baptised in 1616 at Medmenham. In his latter days, probably after the death of his wife in 1625, Sir William the elder made his home with his son at Bockmer. The warm affection existing between the members of this family is one of the striking features in the father's will. He died at Bockmer, September 1628, and was buried at Little Marlow.

The said will is an historical document. Sir William Borlase I was generous to his relatives,

THE MONUMENT OF SIR JOHN BORLASE, BT.

(In the transept of Stratton Audley Church)

THIS massive tomb, somewhat out of harmony with its simple surroundings, commemorates the virtues of Sir John Borlase IV, who died 1689, the last of the Bockmer line. Near at hand is a mural tablet to Admiral Sir John Borlase Warren, Bt. Others of the Warren family are also buried at Stratton Audley (*see* p. 120).

To face p. 112.

thoughtful for all his servants, and liberal to the community in which he lived. As a public benefactor whose good works do follow him, Sir William stands unrivalled in local history. His last dispositions have sundry graceful touches :

> Grand-daughter Anne Burlace, my wines, diamond ring and her cabinet as my goodwyfe appointed so filled as I have directed and shall leave it filled I have given the Cabinet already if I do not give it her before my departure.
> I give nothing to my grandsons and little to my grand-daughters, because I leave it wholly to bee disposed and done by my sonne of whose true care to his children (I thank God) I have just cause to rely, and bee confident. And if they bee obedient to him I hope he will dispose it as he and I have in writing expressed.
> Worthy kinsman Sir John Borlase Knt, £30 to buy him a bason and ewre.
>
> *P.C.C.* 95, Ridley.

There is something delightful about it all. What were the feelings of the granddaughter upon whom the contents of the wine cellar were bestowed ? And in what kinder way could anyone bid a grandson keep himself spotless than by leaving him £30 for a " bason and ewre " ?

The concluding passages of his will concern an almshouse erected by the testator at Marlow in 1624 for the benefit of the poor of Great Marlow, Little Marlow, and Medmenham. The charity was to be endowed with certain lands already bought, together with land to the value of another £20 a year still to be purchased, and the administration of the property was to devolve upon twelve trustees, of whom one should be resident in Medmenham. After the decease of the testator's son the governor of the trust for the time being was to be the lord of the manor of Davers in Little Marlow.

This foundation by a process of evolution has become the Borlase School, but in its first idea simple

education was only one of its features. It was also intended to reclaim the rogue, and to impart to the vagabond an appetite for industry.

> " IF ANY WILL NOT WORKE, NEITHER SHALL HE EATE."
> " IN THE SWEATE OF THY FACE SHALT THOU EATE BREADE."

The work-shy who passed the threshold were reminded by these words over the door that toil and perspiration were their lot in life. If they refused to labour, preferring instead to practise the gentle art of mendicancy, then suitable medicine was administered on the premises. For that purpose the house next the school was to be employed

> as a workhouse and house of correction for the three parishes. Hugh Tanner who now dwells in this house is to teach 20 poor women children of Great Marlow to make bonelace, and to whip all such offenders as the petty constables, officers or tithingmen of the 3 parishes shall bring to him which by law should be so punished, and shall keep for four days in his house of correction any rogue or vagabond taken within the town or parish of Great and Little Marlow and Medmenham, but not out of other parishes.

Any surplus rent derived from the endowment was to be bestowed upon the poor.

THE ANCIENT LIBERTIES OF MARLOW AND MEDMENHAM

The above charity was established by Sir William Borlase as a memorial to his elder son, Henry Borlase, parliamentary burgess for Aylesbury, 18 James I, and subsequently for Marlow, 21 James I. The circumstances preceding the election of Henry Borlase to Parliament are of some interest. In the Parliament of 21 James I (1623–4) it was discovered by a search among the ancient parliamentary writs in the Tower that no burgess had been sent from Wendover, Amersham, and Great Marlow since 2 Edward II (1308).

Petition was therefore presented to the Commons that the ancient liberties of those three boroughs might be restored. The petition was approved by the Commons, but was opposed by James I, who declared he was already troubled with too great a number of burgesses in Parliament. The case was argued before the Committee for Privileges and Returns, and eventually writs were issued for elections from the three boroughs to the same Parliament, whereupon Henry Borlase and Thomas Cotton were returned for Great Marlow. The parliamentary borough then consisted of the parishes of Great and Little Marlow and Medmenham. Until the year 1832 the borough also included Bisham, which up to that time was wholly situated within the parish of Great Marlow.

SIR WILLIAM BORLASE II

The younger son, William Borlase II, was granted licence in 1608 to travel abroad for three years with William Lytton, of Knebworth, a relative of the family, and John Dunster, Fellow of Magdalen. He afterwards devoted himself to the public service, and was knighted in 1617 at Warwick. As burgess for Wycombe in 1627–8 he sat in Parliament side by side with John Hampden, and among other activities he compiled a volume of Parliamentary Notes, now in the Ashburnham Collection. In 1628 he succeeded to the family estates upon the decease of Sir William Borlase I. His own early death, which took place 10th December 1630, at Bockmer, not only cut short a promising political career, but it happened before any trustees had been appointed for the fulfilment of the charity established by his father, with the result that, until 1721, the trust was administered by several persons without any deed of authority to empower them to act in that capacity.

JOHN BORLASE III, BARONET AND DELINQUENT

The dedication of a private Chapel at Fawley Court by the Bishop of Lincoln on 27th December 1631 attracted a number of distinguished visitors. Among them were Sir Miles Hobart of Harleyford, Knightly Duffield of Medmenham Abbey, Joel Barnard, Vicar of Medmenham, and John Borlase III of Bockmer. The latter was son and heir of William Borlase II. This representative of the race has often been wrongly identified with his cousin, Sir John Borlase, Lord Justice of Ireland. The squire of Bockmer was created a Baronet 4th May 1642, by Charles I. He would have subscribed the letter to the Earl of Essex by members of the House of Commons, assembled at Oxford in January 1643, had he not been prevented by accident from being present. As a matter of fact, he did afterwards concur with it. For this action, and for attending the Royalist Parliament at Oxford, he was declared by the House of Commons at Westminster to have forfeited his seat (Corfe Castle). Oliver Cromwell thereupon issued an order for his arrest. Writing from Oxford on 6th June 1645, the officers entrusted with this business informed the Protector that " they had seized the persons of Lord Lovelace, Sir John Burlacie, and others, and intended next day to send them to Worcester, where was the nearest convenient place for confinement."

The arrest of Sir John Borlase was followed by sequestration proceedings, in response to which an answer was filed to the following effect :

> 13 Oct. 1645.
> Sir John Borlase of Medmenham and Bockmore Co. Bucks compounds for delinquency in going to Oxford. As a member of the House of Commons in January 1643 when at Medmenham was summoned to Oxford but refused to go ; whereupon a party of the King's Horse sent to apprehend him, plundered him of all his horses. Afterwards at the solici-

> tations of those nearly related to him went to Oxford for two months and thence into Shropshire. Never bore arms against Parliament, nor sat with those at Oxon, yet his whole estate, real and personal, had been sequestered and his woods cut and wasted to the damage of £3,000. He has taken the National Covenant.
>
> *Calendar of Proceedings of the Committee for Compounding*, 919.

Sir John Borlase was summoned to appear 4th November 1645, before the Committee for Compounding, when his fine was commuted " at the rate of eight years purchase of his fee simple and reversions," an amount which Thomas Langley estimated at £2400. This fine was partly allocated to the support of the Parliamentary garrison at Abingdon. It was paid, or secured, 28th February 1646, whereupon in the following month Sir John Borlase was pardoned and his estates discharged.

Not many days later, Charles I passed through Medmenham on his way to St. Albans, after escaping from Oxford, probably travelling *viâ* Watlington and Turville. The King stayed the night of 28th August 1646 at Hambleden. On the day following Charles rode through Medmenham on his way to St. Albans, the church bells meanwhile merrily ringing, for although he was a fugitive in name, he was yet a king by right, and the politicians of the Long Parliament were by no means so popular as some writers of history would have us believe.

THE LAST OF THE BARONETS

The children of Sir John Borlase III were John IV, Anne, Mary, Frances, Charles, and Baldwin. Two of these children were baptised at Medmenham Church, where the marriage of the second daughter also took place. The latter occasion was a great event in the neighbourhood, celebrated with becoming festivities. Even the vicar that day showed signs of emotion.

He misspelt the bridegroom's name in the register, and towards the end of the inscription his Latin failed him altogether. These trifles have been amended in the following copy :

> *Humphredus Miller de West Peckham in comitatu Cantii baronettus, et Maria Borlase filia Johannis Borlase de Bockmore in parochia de Medmenham in comitatu Bucks, baronetti, in matrimonio conjuncti fuerunt primo die martii* 1663.
>
> *Parish Register*, 1643–1747.

In the same year, and possibly in connection with the same event, Lady Borlase presented to Medmenham Church a very fine pewter flagon, which is still treasured as a memorial of her bounty. She was the elder daughter of Sir John Bankes. Her portrait and that of her husband Sir John Borlase III, by the eminent Dutch painter, Van Dyck, are at Kingston Lacy, Dorset, which is still the residence of the Bankes family. After the death of her husband Lady Borlase became a globe-trotter, and joined the Roman Communion. The epitaph to her memory where she was buried in S. Jaques, Paris, is a remarkable appreciation of her saintly virtues, including as it does the following translated passages :

> Seeking a cure for her infirm body, at the water of Bourbon, received most happily the cure of her soul in the Catholic Church. A free exile from her country within 3 years of 60, she, by God's particular inspiration travelled thro' France, Flanders, Italy, Palestine and Cyprus, that she might leave greater testimonials of her piety and faith. Was held in admiration at Rome and Jerusalem, like a new St. Bridget, nay reverenced by the Barbarians themselves. At the greatest dangers both by sea and land always undaunted, everywhere admired . . . she departed . . . Nov. 16th 1683 aged 62. Ordered in her will she should be buried among the poor whose nurse she was.

The death of Lady Borlase in Paris raised international complications, because the Farmer-General of France seized her personal estate under pretence

that as a foreigner she was subject to the *droit d'aubaine*. This proceeding resulted in a vigorous protest by the British Consul, upon which the French agreed to make restitution, although it was not considered expedient to press for a general declaration that the law did not extend to the English.

A tradition still survives in Medmenham that Charles II and Nell Gwyn came on horseback from Windsor to visit Sir John Borlase at Bockmer, but no corroborating evidence has been discovered, whether in old records or in the Domestic Papers of Charles II. The visit was probably about the year 1665, when Eleanor Gwyn was in favour. When writing of the event Thomas Langley remarked that a very old woman who died in 1730, and who had been a servant in the Borlase family, remembered this visit. Such an occasion would certainly have been a graceful acknowledgment of the loyalty which had cost Sir John Borlase a great deal, and it was rendered by a monarch whose temper was pleasant and social, and whose manners and courtesy were perfect.

Upon the decease of Sir John Borlase, which happened in 1672, the title and property fell to his son Sir John Borlase IV. The latter sat as M.P. for Marlow in the Parliaments of 31 and 32 Charles II, 1 James II, 1 William and Mary. The title lapsed after the death of Sir John Borlase IV in 1688, but the estates were bequeathed by him to Arthur Warren of Stapleford Hall, Notts, who had married the testator's sister Ann.

It is singular for so distinguished a family that no monument remains to their memory in Little Marlow, where most of them were buried. Such an omission may have arisen from the spirit which deprecated life's little vanities. Sir William Borlase (26th August 1628) expressly stipulated that he should be buried " without vain pompe." No corresponding

modesty possessed Sir John Borlase IV. The desire that his virtues should be graven in marble may have arisen from a wish to preserve some record of his illustrious family, seeing that he had no wife or children to cherish his memory. However that may be, he left his executors no discretion in the matter, nor was posterity to be allowed to forget. His will contained this explicit direction :

> To be buried in the chancel of Stratton Audley Church, co. Oxon where my brother Baldwin was interred, if I happen to die in England, with a monument to the full value of £500, " for I would have the best workmen that can be got." Also I give £5 " to the gentleman that shall endict the epitaph . . . without any rhetoric or flourishing."
>
> *P.C.C.* 148, Ent.

Whether or not the sculptor earned his money may be left to the artistic judgment of the reader, but the epitaph was well worth the scholar's reward.

The Borlase family as a whole in the latter generation suffered from *wanderlust* and world-weariness, which is invariably the mental disease of an unspiritual age. Sir John's mother spent her latter days journeying among " the barbarians " of Europe and the Near East. Her younger son Baldwin, also buried at Stratton Audley Church, " wandered through many and divers countries and yet had not gained contentment," thereupon, according to his epitaph, " he escaped to the heavens in the twenty-fourth year of his age." Sir John himself was apparently smitten by the same disease. The reader may form his own conclusions from the following translation of the inscription on his monument :

> Wearied by the length of his travels, yet more so by the journey of life, and relaxing into the pleasant sleep of death, here laid himself down John Borlase baronet, born at Bockmore, resident there, and an inhabitant of Buckinghamshire. Sprung from famous forefathers (well deserved they such an heir !) he yet sought fame in his own conduct, as though he had

BOCKMER

(*Once the home of Cardinal Reginald Pole, and afterwards the residence of the family of Borlase of Buckinghamshire*)

"IN the process of devolution, by which a country residence becomes a tenant farm, it invariably happens that non-essentials quickly go to ruin, and only utilitarian features survive. . . . Parts of Bockmer were pulled down after its conversion into a farm, but during very dry weather outlines of the old foundations can plainly be observed traced in the burnt grass" (*see* pp. 126–7).

To face p. 120.

had none by birth (and) being a noble man, ennobled yet more by the glory of his forebears; still owed no debt to the glory of his forebears, save that they preceded him. A worthy man, surpassing any epitaph, and greater than any. A hero of consummate virtue, completing in himself what had been begun in his race. He devoted the prime of his life to the University of Oxford, growing to manhood among the Humanities, on which throughout his life he sailed, holding nothing (save only righteousness) dearer than Letters. Bidding farewell to the stage, he set out into the theatre [of Life], and with rapid step darted through the world, meantime measuring out more swiftly virtue's journey. At length, having travelled throughout his lifetime, and being sated with days and with his wanderings, he sought his own people once more and gladly yielded to the will of the gods, and brought up the venerable rear of his family, which, since it could produce none other like him, preferred to die out.
He died on the 1st February 1688, aged 48.

Although the rhythm suffers by translation, and the periods are in consequence rendered a little heavy, the epitaph nevertheless provides an interesting psychological study of the "last of the Barons," or rather of the Baronets, in a family intimately connected with Medmenham for more than one hundred eventful years.

OLD SQUIRE WARREN

The new owner of the manor of Medmenham, who had married Ann Borlase, was devoted to economy, particularly as his wealth increased. An extensive stable building at Stratton Audley, incomplete on the death of Sir John Borlase, was allowed by the new proprietor to remain in the same unfinished condition. Old Squire Warren, as the countrymen called him, latterly kept the meanest equipage of any man in his neighbourhood. His harness was tied together with bits of string; his coachman had but one eye; two of his horses were equally unfortunate, and the other four were quite blind. He

was also a martyr to the gout. His children were seven in number, and of these Borlase Warren was the eldest. After the death of his father in 1697 this son inherited the property, but he never associated himself to any extent with his Buckinghamshire estates. The interest of the family had passed away from Medmenham, and the squire of Bockmer was represented there by a bailiff.

THE CHAPEL AT BOCKMER

One place of interest which perished in the course of devolution was the private chapel at Bockmer. There had been a domestic chaplain as long ago as 1535, when John Colyns ministered to the family of Lord Montacute. In such cases the chaplain was also tutor to the rising generation and secretary to the household. It is probable that several of the Borlase family were baptised or married in Bockmer Chapel, seeing that we find comparatively few such entries in the parish registers. Any record of these events must have been removed when the house was dismantled. Ten years after the death of the last Sir John Borlase and in the same year that old Squire Warren died the chapel at Bockmer was still standing, for at that time an event took place there, which has all the appearance of a runaway marriage.

> *Johannes Cooper et Catharina Sherwin in matrimonio conjuncti fuerunt in Capella de Bockmore vigesimo quarto die Octobris circiter horam decimam matutinem per licentiam.* 1697.
>
> *Parish Register*, 1643–1747.

John Cooper and Catherine Sherwin, the contracting parties, were evidently not Medmenham people. The unusual form of the entry, announcing that the ceremony took place at 10 A.M., seems to suggest that although it was a clandestine marriage, yet someone was anxious to establish the fact that it was not exactly a moonlight flit.

THE BORLASE CHARITY

An inquiry into the endowment and management of the Borlase Charity brought Borlase Warren to Marlow, 3rd May 1721, when it appeared that not only was there no official deed for the appointment of trustees, but the lands given by Sir William Borlase had never been properly conveyed for the uses of the charity.

> Accordingly, by decree 10 May 1721 the Commissioners having heard Burlace Warren in his own defence order him within 2 months to enfeoff the lands given by Sir William Borlace for the maintenance of the free school and the other uses of his will to John Webb of Great Marlow malster, Henry Fletcher of Great Marlow draper, James Harman of Great Marlow gent; John Oxtedd of Great Marlow yeoman, Wm. Bradshaw of Great Marlow gardener, Wm. Langley of the same baker, Abel Bird of Great Marlow (and others) . . . and Gabriel Page of Medmenham yeoman.
>
> *Petty Bag. Inq. as to Charitable Uses*, 53/3.

The Gabriel Page named in this document was the son of that name. Gabriel the elder had been a valuable servant in the Borlase family, and Sir John in 1688 had left him a pension of £20 a year for life, which he enjoyed for nearly twenty years. His tombstone and another of Athaliah his wife stand together facing the pathway towards the south-east corner of the churchyard. The trustee of Borlase Charity was their son Gabriel the second. He was bailiff for the Warren estate, and his house at Bockmer End is still identified as Gabriel's.

When Thomas Langley wrote towards the end of that century, there were twenty-four boys at Borlase School, of whom three were chosen from Medmenham and Little Marlow. The boys were allowed 40*s*. each for apprenticeship to a trade. The master was the Rev. Henry Hesketh Gower, and he had a house and a garden with a salary of £15 a year, as well as a

large pasture ground, and another field leased to him by the trustees. The house of correction and the school for twenty-four girls never flourished, the trustees alleging that the estates were inadequate for the complete maintenance of the trust. Some part of the original Borlase School still remains at Marlow and is a good example of seventeenth-century brick and flint work, but most of the present building is of modern construction. The foundation had become a derelict charity by the year 1881, when Rev. Michael Graves was appointed Headmaster. There were then no boys whatever in the school. Under the vigorous guidance of their Headmaster the Governors secured a revision of their charity; fresh life was infused into a stale institution; and the Borlase School has since become one of the most valuable educational assets of South Buckinghamshire.

ADMIRAL SIR JOHN BORLASE WARREN

In the Warren family the name of Borlase was passed on to the eldest son of each generation, until the Buckinghamshire manors changed hands. The last possessor of the name was Admiral Sir John Borlase Warren, Bart., G.C.B., born 5th October 1753, whose brilliant career fully maintained the noble traditions associated with the name he inherited from his distinguished ancestors.

It was the intention of his guardians that John Borlase Warren should be educated for the Church, but the boy was keen to join the Navy. He started his career at Winchester School, then in due course was admitted a fellow commoner of Emmanuel College, Cambridge (September 1769), but in April 1771 he registered as an able seaman on the *Marlborough* guardship in the Medway. This active youth was rated a midshipman (9th April 1772) on board the *Alderney*, a sloop protecting the North Sea Fisheries.

The following year he graduated at Cambridge. In the meanwhile his name on the *Marlborough* had been marked " R " as one who had run away, but the mark was afterwards removed by order of the Navy Board. These adventurous years were apparently spent by John Warren irregularly between the University and the Navy.

Throughout the greater part of an eventful career his warm friend and influential patron was the great Lord Howe. The baronetcy of the Borlase family was restored to John Warren in 1775, soon after he came of age ; then for a while he gave himself up to the pursuits of peace. At that time he purchased Lundy Island, and amused himself with a yacht in the Bristol Channel ; but upon the outbreak of war with America he disposed of his boat, abandoned Lundy Island to the rabbits, and embarked on the *Venus* frigate (1777) for the American station, where he found himself under the command of Lord Howe. In 1778 Sir John Warren was promoted fourth lieutenant of the *Nonsuch*, and the next year first lieutenant on the *Victory*, Sir Charles Hardy's flagship. He obtained his first command within a few months, being appointed to the *Helena*, a sloop of war captured from the French. He was commissioned in 1781 as post-captain, and given the command of the *Ariadne* (20 guns), returning to the North Sea and the Downs.

At this point in his career Sir John Borlase Warren parted with the manors of Medmenham and Little Marlow. The purchasers of both properties were the guardians of William Lee, who under the will of Mr. R. Antonie, of Colworth, Beds, took the name of Lee-Antonie.

Sir John Borlase Warren afterwards rendered distinguished service in the wars against France, capturing a French squadron in April 1794, directing the naval arrangements for an attempted restoration

of the Monarchy in La Vendée the same year, and in 1796 defeating the French attempt to transport troops to Ireland. He was promoted Rear-Admiral 1799, captured a French squadron 1806, became Admiral in 1810, and some few years later received a G.C.B.

In his personal qualities Sir John Borlase Warren displayed the sincerity of a seaman without any of the roughness of the old school, also the elegance of a man of fashion without the dissipation and duplicity which was the current tendency. He married Caroline, daughter of General Clavering, by whom he had three children, but none of them was blessed with the name of Borlase. A new owner had taken possession of the manor of Medmenham, who chose for himself a house near the church. The glory of Bockmer had departed, and for the next few years Medmenham House became the residence of the principal holder of the manor of Medmenham.

BOCKMER FARM

After the death of Sir John Borlase in 1688 the house at Bockmer was deserted. It was then let to tenant farmers, of whom the first was Richard Harding 1693–1713 ; followed by John Keen 1713, John Butler 1729, and other stalwart yeomen who nobly served their generation and passed on. Among the more notable of the latter in the last century were Joseph Hobbs (*fl.* 1840) and Philip Hobbs, whose occupation lasted until his death in recent years.

In the process of devolution, by which a country residence becomes a tenant farm, it invariably occurs that non-essentials quickly go to ruin, and only utilitarian features survive. This is precisely what happened at Bockmer. The extensive walled gardens fell into decay, and are now only dimly outlined by occasional sections of brickwork. The contour of

the ground suggests the idea of ornamental gardens, but any precise knowledge of what they comprised has passed into oblivion.

Parts of Bockmer were pulled down after its conversion into a farm, but during very dry weather outlines of the old foundations can plainly be observed in the burnt grass. The interior was also remodelled. The sixteenth-century panelling which is still one of its attractive features was removed and refixed, but over the fire-place in one room are still preserved the arms of Samuel Backhouse, who married a sister of the founder of the Borlase School :

> Quartering 1 and 4 a saltire ermine, 2 and 3 two chevrons between three scallops.

Within years of current memory Bockmer has recovered something of its former dignity. The house was renovated and considerable additions were made to the farm buildings by Mr. Robert Hudson, who embarked extensively upon horse-breeding and cattle-rearing. More recently still the interior has been partly remodelled and modern conveniences added by Mrs. Hornby Lewis, the present owner, when it was let to Mr. William Odlum, of Kilclare, King's County, Ireland.

CHAPTER V

DANESFIELD

" We spake of many a vanished scene,
  Of what we once had thought and said,
Of what had been, and might have been,
  And who was changed and who was dead."

The Fire of Drift-wood

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW (1807–82)

CHAPTER V

DANESFIELD

THE story of Danesfield is not unlike that of other country seats which have emerged from obscurity. Such places have acquired romance by association with historical remains; they have been further ennobled by intimate connection with distinguished families, and their characteristic features have been enhanced through a gradual process of evolution by the attentions of each successive generation.

THE ROUSE MOIETY OF WITTINGTON

The property now represented by Danesfield Park became a separate estate in the middle of the seventeenth century. Until the decease of Sir Miles Hobart it formed part of the Wittington lands which Sir Reginald Bray purchased from Sir Richard Pole, but after the division of Wittington among the Hobart coheirs it became necessary to make a partition of the lands. This was done by an agreement between the interested parties. One moiety of the property was then possessed by the University of Oxford and the other by William Powell, of Old Windsor, who had purchased the share formerly belonging to John Rouse. A few years after this deed of partition was executed William Powell disposed of his holding for £1770 to Edmond Medlycott, of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, Middlesex.

Indenture 20 Feb. 17 Chas. II (1664–5) between (1) William Powell of Old Windsor co. Berks. gentleman and (2) Edmond Medlycott of St. Martin's in the Fields, co. Middx, gentleman,

whereby Powell, in consideration of £1770 sells to Medlycott all that moiety or one half part as it now stands divided by one indenture tripartite of partition 22 Sept. 1652 betwixt (1) the said William Powell, (2) Thomas Hampson of Taplow co. Bucks Esq. and (3) the Chancellors Masters & Scholars of the University of Oxford & the Rector & Scholars of Exeter College in Oxford & their successors & the Principal Fellows & Scholars of Jesus College in Oxford & the Master Fellows & Scholars of Pembroke College in Oxford of all such manors messuages lands tenements & hereditaments in Medmenham which the said William Powell lately purchased of Robert Huntingdon of Yarmouth co. Norf. Esq. & also all other the manors messuages lands etc. of the said William Powell in Medmenham, except a piece of meadow ground called eight acres piece with a lane leading thereunto formerly sold by the said William Powell unto one Robert Baker of Medmenham yeoman ; to the only proper use & behoof of Edmond Medlycott & his heirs & assigns for ever.

Close Roll, 16 Chas. II, pt. 5, No. 7.

THE MEDLYCOTT FAMILY

Edmond Medlycott, named in the above conveyance, appears to have been a younger son of James Medlycott, dyer, of London, who married Elizabeth Joyner, of Newbury, Berkshire. The eldest son of James and Elizabeth was Thomas Medlycott, of Abingdon, Berkshire, who was Member of Parliament for Abingdon. The Medlycotts traced their descent from a family of that name living at Ponsbury, Shropshire. This family bore arms : quarterly per fesse indented gules and azure, three lions rampant argent.

In the year following his purchase of an estate at Medmenham, a son named James was born to Edmond Medlycott. This child grew up to inherit the property. Very little is known about the family in the neighbourhood. The name seldom occurs in any local record. The sixty years of their occupation are represented by an absolute silence, broken only at the end by the appearance of Mrs. Morton as tenant of the lands then held by James Medlycott.

DR. JOHN MORTON

In the year 1725 James Medlycott or his executors rented the Medmenham estate, then known as "Medlycotts," to Mrs. Morton. She was at that time a widow with a son John, ten years of age, who afterwards became the creator of Danesfield. John Morton matriculated at Oxford, 28th May 1730, at the age of fifteen years, when he joined Trinity College. After taking his degree he proceeded to London, was admitted a barrister of the Inner Temple in 1740, created D.C.L. in 1749, and nine years later became a K.C. and Bencher. Dr. Morton was appointed Chief Justice of Chester in 1762. He was also Attorney-General to Queen Charlotte, leader on the Oxford Circuit, and Deputy High Steward of Oxford University; as well as M.P. for Abingdon (1747–70), New Romney (1770–74), and Wigan (1775) until his death.

The freehold of "Medlycotts" was purchased by John Morton in 1750, presumably from the next of kin of James Medlycott, in the following conveyance:

> Final Concord St. Michael in one month 24 Geo. II.
> Between John Morton Esq. plff. and Bartholomew Bruere gent. Henrietta Bruere spinster, John Bruere clerk, and wife Margaret, and Jenny Grant spinster, deforciant, of the moiety of 2 messuages, one barn, 2 gardens, 100 acres of land, 20 acres of meadow, 20 acres of pasture, and 100 acres of wood and of common of pasture for all cattle and common of turbary in Meddenham otherwise Medmenham, whereupon a plea of covenant was summoned between them etc.
> Conveyance to John Morton with warranty against the heirs of Bartholomew, Henrietta, Margaret and Jenny.
> John Morton paid £120.
> *Feet of Fines* Bucks, Mich. 24 Geo. II.

The purchase money named in the covenant was no more than a nominal portion of an agreed amount. The conveyance of the second moiety would probably

have been drafted in similar terms as between John Morton and other claimants to the estate of the deceased owner. Soon after Dr. Morton acquired the freehold of Medlycotts he rebuilt the house and named it Danesfield. The private grounds surrounding the residence were not then so extensive as they have since become, because the high road from Marlow passed down through the middle of what is now Danesfield Park.

John Morton was contemporary in parliament with William Pitt, and they had both been students at Trinity College, Oxford, but the pompous barrister was no match for his agile fellow-collegian. On one occasion John Morton happened in debate to introduce the words, " King, Lords and Commons " ; he then added with a glance at Pitt : " or as that right hon. gentleman would call them, ' Commons, Lords and King.' " In an instant Pitt was on his feet. " I have frequently heard in this House," he said, " doctrines which surprised me, but now my blood runs cold. I desire the words of the hon. member may be taken down." The clerks having recorded the words, Pitt uttered in a voice of thunder : " Bring them to me." By that time John Morton began to stammer out his apologies : " I meant nothing," he said, " indeed I meant nothing." Thereupon Pitt remarked in an undertone that he would press the matter no further, but in a louder voice he added : " The moment a man acknowledges his error he ceases to be guilty. I have a great regard for the hon. member, and as an instance of that regard give him this advice " : then turning towards John Morton with a withering gaze he went on : " When that hon. member means nothing, I recommend him to say nothing." This one incident in the parliamentary life of John Morton will probably serve better than anything to convey to the reader just what sort of man he was in public affairs.

MRS. SCOTT OF DANESFIELD

(*From a picture by Sir Joshua Reynolds, Pres. R.A.*)

" Sweet fragment of the master's art !
O simple faith ! O rustic heart !
O maid that hath no counterpart
In life's dry dog-eared pages !
Where shall we find thy like ? "

Dolly Varden
BRET HARTE (1839–1902)

To face p. 134.

PURCHASE OF MEDMENHAM ABBEY

While the manor of Medmenham was still in possession of Sir John Borlase Warren he sold to John Morton the mill-pond with its adjacent land. This was evidently with a view to utilising the water supply for Danesfield, but the pipe-track along which water was eventually pumped to the house was not laid until after John Morton's widow had parted with the property.

John Morton was a good friend to the Duffield family. He appears to have been instrumental in sending Edmund Duffield to Oxford University, but for some reason Edmund never loved his patron. Among the writings of Edmund Duffield the following passage appears :

> John Morton Esquire Counsellour at law is Member of Parliament for Abingdon in Berks. Medlicutts (now Danesfield) in Medmenham Parish belongs to him. He is strictly against the Poor, an insolent proud man and lives beyond his fortune ; he is married.

MEDMENHAM ABBEY ESTATE

When the financial affairs of Francis Duffield of Medmenham Abbey reached a critical stage it was to John Morton he turned for assistance. To some extent the help was a measure of self-protection, because John Morton had been acting as surety for loans to Francis Duffield. On 25th June 1777 parts of the Abbey lands were granted to John Morton to indemnify him for £1000 and interest guaranteed to John Vernon of Lincoln's Inn. In the following January a deed was enrolled in the Court of King's Bench by which

> " Duffield in consideration of 5*s*. 0*d*. doth bargain and sell unto John Morton all that messuage or tenement called or known by the name of Medmenham Abbey," together with, " the advowson and right of patronage in the vicarage and parish Church of Medmenham " ; also " all his rights in the

River Thames, his right of Ferry over the River" and all "farms, lands, tithes etc. of Francis Duffield in Medmenham, Marlow, and Hambleden, or elsewhere in County Bucks."

Before his death in 1780, John Morton disposed of the Wood End portion of this property to Joseph Townsend, retaining in his own possession the lands now represented roughly by Danesfield, the village, Medmenham Abbey, and Westfield. It was a good time to invest in real estate, because land was rising in value. To provide the money required for this negotiation, John Morton mortgaged Medmenham village to the Earl of Hardwick. Thus began a process of territorial expansion by which Danesfield in time swallowed up the manor lands with most of the smaller farms. After the death of John Morton his widow continued to live at Danesfield for some years, but financial difficulties arose, and on 7th December 1787 she sold her Medmenham estate for £24,000 to Robert Scott, of Wimpole Street, London. The indenture of this transaction is an interesting document in that it shows clearly what comprised the estate, from what sources the several parts were acquired, and the rentals of certain portions. It is also a remarkable example of how vendors sold their neighbours' property. The right of fishery in the Thames from New Lock to Medmenham Mead, named in the following covenant, belonged at that time to Oxford University (see p. 393), according to the deed of partition which settled the boundary of the respective estates, and the remainder was held by William Lee-Antonie, lord of the manor of Medmenham.

On the 8th of April [28 *Geo. III.*] *at Serjeants Inn in Chancery Lane, London came Elizabeth Morton in her proper person and brought a certain indre which she acknowledged to be her deed and prayed that it might be enrolled of record —viz.*
Indre 7 Dec. 1787 between (1) Elizabeth Morton of Danesfield in the parish of Medmenham widow executrix and devisee

named in the will of John Morton Esq. late of Danesfield, Chief Justice of Chester, deceased and (2) Robert Scott of Wimpole Street in the parish of St. Marylebon Esq.
Whereas Elizabeth Morton on 13 June last agreed to sell to Robert Scott the messuages outhouses gardens and appurtenances at Danesfield, Bucks, then in her occupation with the farm and lands then in her occupation and the advowson of the Vicarage of Medmenham & all other messuages lands woods tithes etc. of Elizabeth in Medmenham (being hereditaments hereinafter to be expressed) whereof she was seised as devisee of her husband or in her own right for £24,000 payable £5,000 at the making of the agreement, £14,000 at Michaelmas 1787 when a conveyance was to be executed by Elizabeth subject to 2 mortgages, amounting to the principal of £5,000, which Scott was to pay with interest at Christmas, taking the rents from Michaelmas : Now (on payment of the first £5,000) and of the £14,000 etc. Elizabeth Morton sells to Scott all that messuage farmhouse or tenement & those several parcels of arable land & pasture called Crab Tree Close, Fourteen Acres Piece, The Great & Little Starts, The Stable Close, Barry Dean Close, Fox Close, Short Close & Adam Piddle, ground called the Moores or Hydes, 1 acre meadow in Charll Mead, Starts Barn & Yard all in Medmenham & formerly in the tenure of Thomas Church as tenant to Francis Duffield and under the yearly rent of £47 15*s*. 0*d*. including the tithes thereof hereinafter mentioned ; parcels of woodland called Bisley's Wood, The Mill Grove, Jollin's Grove, Berry Dean Coppice, Chalk Pit Shaw or Goulders Shaw and the Picked Wood in Medmenham all formerly in the tenure of Francis Duffield ; all manner of tithes of corn, grain, hay, wood and underwood out of any part of the said lands tenements & woods & in the premises heretofore mentioned except the tithes out of Great Starts Fields, of which tithes Francis Duffield was seised as rector & impropriator of the Rectory of Medmenham ; also a cottage formerly in the possession of William Johnston, labourer, a cottage in the occupation of [*blank*] Furnell, labourer, another formerly in the occupation of Paul Hobbs, labourer, another formerly in the occupation of [*blank*] Coker, all in Medmenham ; tithes of hay & grass out of said Elizabeth's meadow called Medmenham East Mead ; being the same messuage lands tithes and cottages, which by indres of lease & release 29/30 Sept 1776 were conveyed by the said John Morton deceased to the use of the Earl of Hardwick in mortgage ; and also all that close of meadow ground called the Abbey

Mead in Medmenham, bounded on the South & South-East by the Thames, on the North by 3 several meadows lately belonging to Sir John Borlace Warren bart., on the West by a close called Court Garden & the orchard of Medmenham Abbey ; pastures called Ox close the Further & the Hither Oat Close ; Pretty Meadow & Long Orchard with a barn standing on part of Ox Close ; which last mentioned premises were formerly in the occupation of John Franklyn as tenant to John Morton ; arable land called Chess Land (4 acres) beyond the further Oat Close & adjoining to the Western fence of Oat Close, Great & Little Bluesdens (arable) which 3 closes were in the tenure of Elizabeth Robins & since of John Morton, several messuages under one roof formerly in the several occupation of John Johnston & John Nibbs, junr. ; cottage formerly in tenure of John Nibbs the elder with hop ground, several small pieces of pasture land, the great tithes of Abbey Mead & of all the above meadows & arable lands save the tithe of Little Bluesden Close of which the Vicar of Medmenham is endowed, the right of patronage & perpetual advowson of Medmenham Vicarage, which Abbey Mead & other lands are part of the devised estate of John Morton, deceased ; and, also " all that Messuage Tenement or Mansion House known by the name of the Monastery or Abbey of Medmenham in the parish of Medmenham the orchard adjoining & occupied therewith with the stable adjoining " containing 2 ac. 3 r. 20 p. the piece of meadow adjoining & occupied with the said messuage called Court Garden (6 ac. 1 r. 8 p.) all that piece of garden ground next the wharf hereinafter mentioned (26 perches), all that messuage, tenement or wharf house in Medmenham formerly in the occupation of [*blank*] Gun widow, the wharf adjoining, all that passage over the river Thames called Medmenham Ferry, the eyot or ozier bed in the river Thames (1 rd. 26 p.) all other eyots or ozier beds in the Thames (27 perches) another eyot or ozier bed (1 rd. 8 p.), another called Grass Eyot or Island Meadow (1 ac. 1 r. 32 p.) an eyot or ozier bed in the Thames (1 rd. 3 p.) a piece of ground parcel of Little Grange Orchard (2 rds. 1 p.) and taken from thence for a road into Charll Meadow over part of the said wharf the great tithes of all the pieces of land last mentioned save Court Garden & the ozier beds of which tithes the Vicar of Medmenham is endowed, which Abbey & lands were other parts of the devised estate of John Morton deceased ; & also the Three Acres Shaw (abbuttals given), Millgrove wood (abbuttals given), ground called Mill Pond

Hill, Long Close, Picked Close, all which last mentioned lands were formerly in the tenure of Sir John Borlace Warren & Thomas Osborne & were other part of the devised estate of John Morton, which by indre of demise 8 Feb. 1787 were demised to Abraham Whitaker in mortgage ; also the messuage formerly called Medlicots in Medmenham, & the fields belonging called Medmenham Hill without Juniper Hill, Strawberry Field, Danes Ditches Fields, Little King's Arable etc. etc. Medenham East Mead (29 ac.), meadow called Medmenham Mead Lane, woodland called Medmenham Hill Wood, Great King's Wood etc. a cottage called Burrages & all other lands whereof James Medlicott of Medmenham died seised, & which were purchased by said John Morton from Margaret Grant Jenny Grant & o^{rs} (named), & are other part of the devised estate of John Morton & an undivided moiety of which said premises hereinbefore next described is other part of the premises mortgaged 8 Feb. 1787 ; also all that right of fishery in the River Thames comprising the halfstream next Medmenham in 2 separate parcels, the one beginning from the Lock at New Lock in Medmenham to the Upper End of Medmenham East Mead, in length 154 poles, the other beginning at the lower end of the Abbey Orchard to the upper end of the eyot in Medmenham Town Meadow, in length 92 poles, which fishery is or late was in tenure of James Moore at the yearly rent of £5 & which fishery & premises last described were sometime since conveyed to Elizabeth Morton.

King's Bench Plea Roll, 552, m. 1150.

THE SCOTT FAMILY

Robert Scott II was son of another Robert Scott I who accumulated a fortune in the world of commerce. He was of the parish of Lauder, co. Berwick. In 1767 the elder Robert Scott bought an estate at Crailing, co. Roxburgh, from Lord Cranstown. Four years later he died at Blackheath, where he had a residence, bequeathing the bulk of his property to his son Robert Scott II, while to his daughters Elizabeth and Rebecca he left annuities of £200 each. Robert Scott the younger was educated at Eton College, and in 1782 he married Emma Assheton Smith, daughter of Thomas Assheton Smith, of Tedworth, Hants. Having thus

bestowed his affections in the balmy south, Robert next proceeded to transfer to the same congenial clime his material possessions. He sold the property at Crailing in 1786, and the following year he bought the Morton estate. His first enterprise was to rebuild Danesfield, a work done with so much artistic taste that it commanded the enthusiastic eulogy of Thomas Langley, the local historian of that century. The house then erected was a roomy building of the Georgian type, which remained standing, except for sundry additions, for more than a century, and was the home of the Scott and Murray families for some few generations.

THE MURRAY AND SCOTT MARRIAGE

The daughter Elizabeth, to whom Robert Scott I bequeathed an annuity, married Charles Murray, British Consul at Madeira. Charles was the son of John Murray of Philiphaugh, co. Selkirk, by Eleanor, daughter of Lord Basil Hamilton of Baldoon. The son of the Murray and Scott marriage was born 1st September 1777 at Madeira, and he was blessed at baptism with the name of both parents, being introduced to the world as Charles Scott Murray, but the hyphenated name was never officially adopted during his lifetime. It was to this nephew that Robert Scott II left the reversion of his estate after the decease of Emma Scott. By the same will Robert Scott distributed legacies amounting to over £70,000, also fourteen annuities ranging from £100 to £2000 a year. The value of his estate must have been something approaching £400,000. Robert Scott died at Danesfield 6th February 1808, and was buried at Medmenham. In the following month Charles Murray also died at Lisbon, aged 74 years.

Charles Scott Murray married Augusta Elizabeth, daughter of John Nixon, a family claiming descent

CHARLES ROBERT SCOTT SCOTT-MURRAY, ESQ., J.P.

(*Born at the Manor House, Hambleden*, 1815; *educated at Eton College, and Christ Church, Oxford; M.P. for Buckinghamshire*, 1841–45; *High Sheriff*, 1852; *died at Bournemouth*, 1882)

THIS representative of an honourable family was the outstanding figure in Medmenham during the nineteenth century. He was a maker of history. His share in the Tractarian Movement, and the works he carried out at Medmenham, would in themselves entitle him to a leading place in any local history (*see* pp. 144–9).

To face p. 140.

SCOTT-MURRAY OF DANESFIELD AND HAMBLEDEN*

ARMS: (Scott)—On a bend az. an estoile between two crescents, and on a border engr. sa. 3 escallops az. Crest: a stag trippant.
(Murray)—A bugle-horn proper, stringed gu., on a chief az. 3 mullets gu. Crest: a demi-savage wreathed about the temples and loins holding a bugle-horn.

ROBERT SCOTT, of Lauder, co. Berwick; *d.* at Blackheath, 1771. = Elizabeth (survived).

John Murray, of Philliphaugh, co. Selkirk. = Eleanor, dau. of Lord Basil Hamilton.

1782
ROBERT SCOTT, of Wimpole St.; bought Danesfield 1787; *d.* there *s.p.* 1808. = Emma Assheton Smith, dau. of Thomas Assheton Smith of Tedworth; *d.* 1833.

1772
Elizabeth = Charles Murray, British Consul at Madeira; *d.* at Lisbon, 1808.

CHARLES SCOTT MURRAY, born at Madeira, 1777; of Hambleden, Danesfield and Cavendish Sq.; *d.* 1837. = Augusta Elizabeth, dau. of John Nixon, and widow of John Buller of Trenant Park; *d.* 1862.

Elizabeth Eleanor Murray. *d.* at Berkhampstead, 1837.

1846
CHARLES ROBERT SCOTT SCOTT-MURRAY, born at Hambleden; M.P. and High Sheriff for Bucks; of Danesfield; *d.* at Bournemouth, 1882. = Hon. Amelia Charlotte, eldest dau. of Thomas Alexander Fraser, 14th Baron Lovat.

Douglas John Scott-Murray, born at Hambleden.

Augusta Elizabeth Anna Scott-Murray, born at Hambleden.

CHARLES ALOYSIUS SCOTT-MURRAY, of Danesfield and Hambleden.

Basil Henry Scott-Murray.

Augustus Scott-Murray.

Two others.

* Based upon *Scott-Murray Family Papers*, by C. R. S. Scott-Murray, Esq. Names in SMALL CAPITALS denote lords of Medmenham Manor.

Table No. VII.

from the Barons Nixon, who in the dim ages ravaged the Scottish border. The first husband of Augusta Nixon was John Buller, of Trenant Park. He died at an early age in London, and was buried in St. George's Chapel, Windsor. After eight years the widow married Charles Scott Murray, by whom she had three children : Charles Robert Scott, Douglas John, and Augusta Elizabeth Anna. These were all born and baptised at Hambleden.

The manor of Hambleden, after the decease of Sir Robert Clayton, was disposed of by his solicitor, Mr. R. J. Treward, to whom it had been bequeathed, and it was then purchased by Robert Scott. For some years afterwards the Manor House was let to Robert Brudenel, sixth Earl of Cardigan, but in 1815 the house became the home of Charles Scott Murray. He lived there until the death of Mrs. Scott in 1834, when he removed to Danesfield. Three years later Charles Scott Murray died at Danesfield, leaving an heir still in minority.

The portraits of Robert Scott and Emma Scott, painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds, were bequeathed in the widow's will to posterity. Her own portrait was to be given to Fanny Crewe, her niece, and her husband's picture was left to Charles Scott Murray.

THE MANOR OF MEDMENHAM

For more than 600 years the temporal and spiritual lordship of the manor of Medmenham had been divided. While the spiritual patronage was exercised by the abbots of Medmenham and their successors, the temporal lordship descended along a separate line through divers families, until both parts were reunited in the ownership of Charles Scott Murray.

When Sir John Borlase Warren disposed of the manor of Medmenham in 1781, a fact which has been observed elsewhere, the property was acquired by the

guardians of William Lee, a minor, who under the will of Mr. R. Antonie, of Colworth, co. Beds, took the name of Antonie. William Lee was the son of another William Lee, of Totteridge Park, Herts, and was the descendant of the Right Hon. Sir William Lee, Lord Chief Justice of England. By the purchase of the manors of Medmenham and Little Marlow, his guardians obtained the influence which secured the return of William Lee-Antonie in 1789 as Member of Parliament for Great Marlow; but the same bias failed at the next election (1796) to secure the election of his brother-in-law, John ffiott, a merchant of London. The latter was defeated by Owen Williams, who sat for Great Marlow many years. William Lee-Antonie afterwards (1802) represented Bedford, and he died an old bachelor in September 1815, at Colworth House, Beds, leaving all his possessions on certain terms to the son of the defeated candidate for Great Marlow.

The will of William Lee-Antonie seems to suggest that he had never been happy with his new name, also that he profoundly disapproved of his sister's married name. He therefore made it a condition of inheritance that the heir should take his own original name, and that any descendants should be bound to the same.

> Will of William Lee-Antonie Esq. of Colworth House, co. Beds, 19 Dec. 1814.
>
> It is my will that the said John ffiott, Wm. Edward ffiott (and the rest) as and when they respectively become entitled to my said estates take upon themselves the surname of Lee only and his and their descendants be called in all deeds and writings by that surname only and that if . . . (they) shall refuse or neglect to use such surname shall forfeit his or their estate (which shall go to the next in succession).
>
> *P.C.C.* 592, Pakenham.

John ffiott, son of the merchant of that name, inherited on these terms all his uncle's estates in

Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire, and Middlesex. He was born in 1784 at Totteridge, graduated in 1806 at Cambridge, and became LL.D. in 1816, soon after the death of his uncle. He took the name of Lee by Royal Mandate in the year of his relative's decease. John Lee, as he was afterwards designated, sold the manor of Medmenham about 1831 to Charles Scott Murray, but he retained for some twenty years afterwards the villa opposite Medmenham Church, where he and his uncle had occasionally resided.

As the years went on Charles Scott Murray extended his borders. When industrial ventures were in their infancy the purchase of land seemed to offer the safest investment of capital, for most people worked on the land or were employed in dealing with the products of the land. Moreover the security was then continually increasing in value. The holding of Robert Scott in Medmenham early in the nineteenth century had been less than 200 acres. In 1845 Charles Robert Scott Murray and his mother Augusta possessed between them 1647 acres, which was nearly three-fourths of the parish. The remaining fraction belonged mostly to Oxford University (151 acres), to Joseph Townsend (153 acres), and to Joseph Clarke (333 acres). Both the latter were of Wood End. At that time the Danesfield lands extended from Wittington to Fawley, and from the Thames to Fingest.

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC INFLUENCE

Charles Robert Scott Murray, who succeeded to Danesfield in 1837, was educated at Eton and at Christ Church, Oxford, where he was greatly impressed by the Tractarian movement. It was an attempt to awaken the Catholic spirit in the English Church, to go behind the Reformation settlement,

DANESFIELD HALL

(*The tall windows on the left overlook the courtyard*)

SOME parts of the oak panelling in the background of this picture once adorned the Scott-Murray Chapel in old Danesfield. At the west end of the hall, facing towards the gallery, is the stone chimney-piece illustrated at p. 150.

To face p. 144

and to connect the Church with the teaching of the early Christian Fathers. Its leaders were Keble, Newman, and Pusey. Its most prominent features were the famous "Tracts for the Times," setting out the Catholic teaching of the new school. One of the most immediate results was a widespread restoration of parish churches. On the impulse of this movement extensive alterations were carried out at Medmenham Church. While these works were still in progress Newman and several of his followers seceded to the Church of Rome, and among them went Charles Robert Scott Murray.

After leaving Oxford, Charles Robert Scott Murray was returned to Parliament, chiefly by the influence of the Duke of Buckingham, as one of the Conservative members for the county, and he sat for Buckinghamshire from 1841 until his conversion to the Roman Communion induced him to resign his seat. In January of 1845 he was travelling with his mother and sister in Italy, and while they were in Rome Charles Robert was solemnly rebaptised by Cardinal Fransoni, Prefect of Propaganda.

Soon after his conversion to the Roman faith, Mr. Scott Murray married the Hon. Amelia Charlotte, eldest daughter of Thomas Alexander Fraser, 14th Baron Lovat. The children of this marriage were Charles Aloysius, Basil Henry, and Augustus. About that time the hyphenated surname Scott-Murray was adopted by official licence. For thirty years after the conversion of its owner, Danesfield became one of the centres of Roman Catholic influence in England. It was at Danesfield that Cardinal Wiseman was first received with pomp and royal ceremony on his return to this country as Cardinal Archbishop of the Church of Rome in England. In recognition of his valuable services Pope Pius IX conferred upon Charles Robert Scott Scott-Murray the Cross of the

Commandership of the Order of St. Gregory the Great.

One of his first works after Mr. Scott-Murray's conversion was to erect a Roman Catholic church at Marlow, designed by Augustus Welby Pugin and dedicated to St. Peter. While the church was building a room for services was hired near at hand, and when Mass was first said there the congregation consisted of Mr. Scott-Murray, the priest's sister, and an Irish woman from Cookham. A small endowment was settled upon the mission by the patron, and a brief was subsequently granted by Pope Pius IX, conferring upon the owner of Danesfield and his successors, being Roman Catholics, the right of presentation to the Marlow Mission. One of the chief ornaments of the building is the founder's tomb.

The completion of the Marlow Mission was followed by the erection of a domestic chapel at Danesfield. It was commenced by Augustus Welby Pugin, before the sad malady came which blighted his genius, and it was finished in 1853 by his son. The chapel was simple in design and noble in effect ; planned in the Decorated style, having three windows each of three lights on each side, and five-light windows facing east and west. The walls were lined with oak panelling. The altar was of stone supported upon slender shafts of green marble. Set in the altar was a rich shrine, in which reposed the relics of St. Constantia. The carved stone reredos was in five compartments. In the centre panel was a figure of the Blessed Virgin with the Infant Saviour, while in the others were scenes from the life of St. Charles Borromeo, to whom also the building was dedicated. St. Charles was the patron saint of the founder. The chapel was connected with the house by a vestibule, the walls of which were decorated with the Stations of the Cross brought from Jerusalem. Among

other pictures in the chapel were paintings of the Crucifixion and of Pope Pius IX, both works being by the artist Seitz. On the ceiling of the chapel, which was divided into panels, were stencillings symbolical of the virtues and attributes of the Virgin Mary.

Sundry other relics of the saints were also treasured in the chapel at Danesfield, and notably the so-called Uncorrupted Hand of Saint James the Less. This relic may still be seen at the Roman Catholic Church in Marlow. The pedigree of the treasure has many long gaps, and its history is somewhat unconvincing, particularly before the year 1040, when the relic was deposited at Bremen. Tradition asserts that the hand of St. James was brought from Germany in 1123 by the Empress Maud, who gave it to her father King Henry I, the founder of Reading Abbey. The King is said to have bestowed the holy relic upon the Abbey, and there it remained until 1539, when the Abbey was dissolved. All trace of the hand was afterwards lost, except that Dr. John London, who visited Reading Abbey at the dissolution, declared that he took away the relics, including the hand of St. James. Some workmen digging in the precincts of Reading Abbey in 1810 found a box containing a perfectly formed fleshy hand, holding a slender rod surmounted by a crucifix, which is the relic now preserved at Marlow. It is a hand with taper fingers and almond-shaped nails, and is so small that it might well be a woman's hand. Some writers suggest it was the hand of the Empress Maud, others say it was the hand of Queen Adeliza, the second consort of King Henry II. In any case the relic is in a remarkable state of preservation.

The zeal of the owner of Danesfield for his new faith brought him into the limelight in 1852, when he filled the office of High Sheriff for the County. The Assize that year was opened at Aylesbury by Mr.

Justice Crompton. With the usual ceremony the High Sheriff took the Judge to Aylesbury Church, then they drove to the Roman Catholic Chapel at Aylesbury, where Mass was said and a sermon was preached. The next day Lord Chief Justice Campbell appeared at Aylesbury, and charged the Grand Jury in condemnation of the High Sheriff, as one who had brought into court " a Roman Catholic priest in the vestment of his order." The Grand Jury expressed their concurrence in the indignation of the Lord Chief Justice, and *The Times* in a leading article next morning re-echoed the thunder. It was afterwards explained that the Chaplain of Assize was the attendant of the High Sheriff and not the Chaplain of Her Majesty's Judges, so there the matter rested.

IMPROVEMENTS AT DANESFIELD

In the year 1837, when he inherited Danesfield, Charles Robert Scott-Murray was nineteen years of age. The accumulated profits of the estate at that time were considerable. Mrs. Scott had lived a retired life after the death of her husband, and the possession of her nephew Charles Scott Murray had been too brief for many changes. His principal work had consisted in sundry additions to Danesfield House, and the arrangement by which the water supply for Danesfield is pumped from the village spring. The young heir who followed him launched out into the depths. Besides building the Roman Catholic chapels at Danesfield and Marlow, and endowing the latter, he provided the entire cost of diverting the Marlow Road from Medmenham Gate to Rassla's Wood, incorporating the former highway into Danesfield Park. He constructed the bridge across the Marlow Road, made the kitchen garden, and built the gardener's house. He restored the house at Keen's Barn, which was the old name for the home

farm at Danesfield. The neighbourhood of Kingswood and repeated mispronunciation have now made that place Kingsbarn. The upper and lower lodges of Danesfield were also the work of Charles Robert Scott-Murray, as well as the presbytery for the priest ministering at Danesfield Chapel, and a school near Medmenham Gate. In the village he partly rebuilt the Dog and Badger inn. The chapel at Danesfield was served for some years by Canon Osman, and the schools were staffed by the Sisterhood of St. Paul.

A PERIOD OF TRANSITION

For some years before his death Charles Robert Scott-Murray was in failing health, so that he was obliged to spend the winter on the Continent or in the South of England, where he bought a house at Bournemouth. One of his principal hobbies had been hunting up matters of historical interest. As a young man he explored the parish records of Medmenham, then he turned his attention to tracing his own ancestry in the Murray line, but not with much success. At that time the careful calendaring of historical records had scarcely been touched. One thing for which we have reason to honour his memory is that he left a number of notes, some of which have been incorporated in this narrative. He pursued his investigations at his Bournemouth home, endeavouring to trace his paternal descent from James, Earl of Murray, a natural son of King James IV of Scotland. His illness gradually became more acute, and he passed to rest at Bournemouth on Sunday, 27th August 1882. The same week his body was laid in the founder's tomb of the church he had built at Marlow, by the side of his son Augustus, who had died 8th February 1871.

Upon his decease the estate, which was then valued at £130,000, descended for the most part to Charles Aloysius Scott-Murray, subject to the terms

of the marriage settlement in 1846, and to a further settlement at the marriage of Charles Aloysius. There were also certain provisions for others of the family. The house at Bournemouth was bequeathed to his widow, the Hon. Amelia Charlotte; Danesfield, The Deanery, Marlow, and the house in Cavendish Square became the property of his eldest son. The old home at Danesfield never recovered its former prosperity after the death of its late owner. A period of agricultural depression had set in. The value of land was on the wane. Charles Aloysius Scott-Murray had resided at Hambleden Manor since his marriage in 1872, and he never came to live at Danesfield. For some years the house was let furnished to successive tenants, who came principally for the shooting, until the whole of the Scott-Murray estate in Medmenham was offered for sale. States and Lodge Farm were purchased in 1895 by Mr. Hudson Kearley, M.P., and Medmenham Abbey with about 100 acres was acquired by Mr. Robert Hudson, eldest son of Robert Spear Hudson, of Bache Hall, Cheshire. About two years later Mr. Hudson bought Danesfield, Bockmer, and other property in the parish which had not found a purchaser in the 1895–96 sales.

IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

The first determination of the new owner of Danesfield was to rebuild what had been the home of the Scott-Murray family, and he did it very thoroughly. Leaving the old house standing, he built, about two hundred yards away, on a site nearer the river, the mansion now known as Danesfield. It was planned by Mr. Romaine Walker, F.R.I.B.A., in the style of the Italian Renaissance, and it was finished with such disregard of expense that it has become one of the show places of the country. The new house was

A CHIMNEY PIECE AT DANESFIELD

THIS chimney piece, in the hall at Danesfield, was copied from an original in the Council Chamber of the Hôtel de Ville (*aed.* 1526–28) at Courtrai. The original work commemorated the wedding of the Emperor Charles V of the Netherlands and the Infanta Isabella of Spain, which took place in 1526 at Seville. The stonework of the mantelpiece at Courtrai extends only to the second cornice, which is plain and not pierced. Above this plain cornice the uppermost section of the original is carved in wood, finishing with a string course over the canopies, and having no top cornice or terminals.

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THE central figure is the Emperor Charles V of the Netherlands. On the right corbel is Isabella, portrayed as Peace, symbolising the treaty between France and the Netherlands signed at Madrid (January 1526), whereby Charles V obtained the suzerainty of Flanders. On the left corbel the figure of Justice represents the rule of Charles V in the Netherlands, where he consolidated local edicts and usages into a single system. The statuettes under the upper canopies represent eight moral virtues; the panels in the middle section depict the corresponding vices; the scenes in the bottom tier indicate the penalties of the respective vices. From left to right they thus appear—

VIRTUES: Duty, humility, liberality, chastity, brotherly love, temperance, patience, watchfulness.

VICES: Depravity, pride, avarice, voluptuousness, envy, gluttony, anger, sloth. The symbols are conventional: *e.g.* gluttony is a woman holding a jug and riding a pig, sloth is a man riding an ass.

PENALTIES: Venality, callousness, rapacity, surfeit, cruelty, crapulence, malice, remorse. The crowned king in one of these scenes indicates worldly power; remorse is suggested by the five foolish virgins.

Beneath Justice is Chaos (a drifting boat); and below Peace is Destruction (tumbling castles).

The return ends of the mantelpiece, not reproduced here, continue the three tiers left and right. These panels portray the Divine Attributes (*top*), theological virtues and vices (*middle*), and sacraments (*bottom*). From left to right they thus appear—

ATTRIBUTES: Power, Purity; Bounty, Saintliness.

VIRTUES (*l.*) AND VICES (*r.*): Charity, hope, faith; worldliness (*Jezebel*), indifference, violence.

SACRAMENTS: Confirmation, Penance (*Prodigal Son*), Sacrifice (*Gethsemane*); Baptism, Lord's Supper (*Viaticum*), Mass for the Dead.

started in 1899, and was completed in 1901, but much has been done almost continuously since then to beautify and adorn the fabric. The approach from the west is through the tower entrance into a paved courtyard. The whole range of buildings is uncommon, in that it is built of rock chalk quarried near Westfield, a material which although soft in texture has been found to possess excellent weather-resisting qualities. The panelling from Danesfield Chapel was incorporated in the hall of the new house, but for the most part the other furnishings were entirely new. In the great hall, which has a magnificent open timbered roof, is a chimney-piece of Malta stone, copied from an original in the Town Hall of Courtrai. The music gallery at the east end of the hall has a very fine two-manual organ. The antique panelling of the dining-room formerly adorned a country house in Gloucestershire. In the salon the marble chimney-piece, with its bronze ornamentation, which was added in 1920 when the room was remodelled, is the replica of a similar work in the Palace of Versailles. In every direction the harmony of the work assists to promote the general effect. On the side towards the river an Italian garden continues the general architectural design out into the landscape. Standing on the brow of a hill, overlooking the valley of the Thames, the house is certainly outstanding among many picturesque residences to be found along the banks of England's most stately river.

After the new mansion was completed the old house was pulled down and the Roman Catholic Chapel was demolished. While Danesfield was still in building, Robert Hudson also carried out extensive improvements in other directions, including a house for the estate agent at Kingswood, and other operations which have been noticed elsewhere. His work was

scarcely completed when he decided to sell the whole of his Medmenham possessions. The freeholds then fell into the hands of Mr. Hossack, a speculator in real estate, who in 1910 sold the Danesfield and Bockmer portions, with the advowson of the benefice, to Mrs. Arthur Hornby Lewis, the present owner. The earlier associations of Mr. Hornby Lewis had been with the north of England and Cheshire, of which county he was Deputy-Lieutenant (1899), and High Sheriff (1905–6). Before her marriage, Mrs. Hornby Lewis was Helen Stewart, daughter of James Reid Stewart, D.L., J.P., of Calder Park, Lanarkshire. The present owner of Danesfield has considerably enriched the interior of the house as well as extended the ornamental gardens, and it has been accomplished with such artistic taste that there are few houses of modern time which, in their general dignity, can rival Danesfield in beauty of design or charm of environment.

Although it is a creation of the twentieth century, Danesfield still has its links with mystery and romance. The name connects itself with the rude encampment on the hill-crest within the Park, the history of which is lost in oblivion. It was the home of primitive man, the haunt of Danish adventurers, the prison of Saxon hostages, and without doubt a place of hot encounters and sieges. The centuries have wiped out all local tradition of these things. Standing on the crest of a rustic bank between the house and the river, and looking westward into what seems a charming deep ravine, not many people realise they are treading the ramparts of prehistoric fortifications. Only when traces of military occupation have been accidentally discovered in the neighbourhood have the minds of men wandered back to the strange events which must have taken place in these quiet surroundings.

THE SHADOWY SISTER

On the other side of the house, towards Medmenham Gate, history of another kind repeats itself. There in the gloaming may sometimes be seen the Grey Lady of Danesfield Park. Dressed in the garb of a Roman Sisterhood, with pale and solemn face, and holding in her hand an old-fashioned lantern, the ghostly lady walks from where Danesfield Chapel formerly stood down the hill towards the school which was once near Medmenham Gate, and there she disappears. In many places a family ghost of the harmless variety is regarded by estate agents as a feature tending to enhance the value of any property. The shadowy sister has no such ambition. She walks only in the leafy glades, and she seeks no recognition of her devotion. She is just the little "Sister of St. Paul," who loved so well her place in the village school that she returns again to haunt the paths of bygone days.

THE ANNALS OF DANESFIELD

1634. One moiety of Wittington fell to John Rouse, vicar of Santon Downham, cousin of Sir Miles Hobart.

1646. The executors of John Rouse disposed of the above interest for £1200 to Robert Huntingdon, merchant, of Yarmouth, who very soon afterwards sold his estate to William Powell, of Old Windsor.

1652. A deed of partition was executed dividing Wittington into two separate estates, and the Rouse moiety afterwards became Danesfield.

1665. William Powell disposed of his holding to Edmond Medlycott, St. Martin's-in-the-Fields.

1725. The Medlycott estate in Medmenham was rented to Mrs. Morton.

1750. Dr. John Morton purchased the freehold from the next of kin of James Medlycott, and renamed the house Danesfield.

DANESFIELD

1778. Dr. John Morton acquired Medmenham Abbey estate, with the advowson of the Church, from Frances Duffield.

1787. Mrs. Morton sold all her Medmenham interests to Robert Scott, Wimpole Street, Marylebone.

c. 1790. Robert Scott built the first Danesfield mansion.

1831. Dr. John Lee sold the manor of Medmenham, including Bockmer House, to Charles Scott Murray, son of Charles Murray and Elizabeth Scott.

1850. Charles Robert Scott Scott-Murray, who had joined the Roman Communion, built in Danesfield Park a Roman Catholic chapel, school, and presbytery.

1895–1897. The Scott-Murray estates in Medmenham were sold, and Danesfield, the Abbey, Westfield, Bockmer, and Wood End were purchased by Mr. Robert Hudson.

1901. Mr. Hudson completed the new Danesfield mansion, and demolished the old building, including the chapel.

1910. The Hudson estates in Medmenham were sold to Mr. Hossack, who disposed of Danesfield and Bockmer, with the advowson of the Church, to Mrs. Arthur Hornby Lewis.

KINGSWOOD HOUSE

CHAPTER VI

THE MONKS OF MEDMENHAM

"Then I thought of the ancient time—
The days of thy Monks of old,—
When to Matin, and Vesper, and Compline chime,
The loud Hosanna roll'd,
And, thy courts and 'long-drawn aisles' among,
Swell'd the full tide of sacred song."

A Legend of Hampshire
RICHARD BARHAM (1788–1845)

CHAPTER VI

THE MONKS OF MEDMENHAM

THE conception of a monastic community, in which people lived a corporate life, bound by vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, was no passing fashion of certain centuries ; it is the expression of an idea which has always found favour with religious people from very ancient days. The Christian faith was first propagated in England principally through the Celtic monastic system, and it was spread by the establishment of branch houses and preaching stations dependent upon the central monastery, reproducing as far as possible the common life of the monastery. Its truest source of influence with the heathen was the example of a Christ-like life once more lived among men. The monastic houses of Celtic and Saxon England failed because the fervour of lofty ideals and self-sacrifice—which are the marks of a missionary body—perished under the complacent influence of custom and ease, when the new faith had become fairly established.

In the twelfth century dawned one of those great awakenings of the spiritual life which from time to time have moved this nation. England was experiencing all the joy and enthusiasm of a great and widespread revival of religion. It was all the greater, all the more productive of genius and lasting enthusiasm, because it was closely allied with the development of a national sentiment. At the same time came also a new birth of the monastic idea throughout Western Europe.

There were several religious Orders in that day dedicated to monastic rule, but the source of them all

was the Order of St. Benedict. Carthusians, Cluniacs, and Cistercians each had their own special form of life, and each differed from the Benedictine in matters of allegiance, discipline, and administration. But greatest, most famous, and eventually most powerful, of all the reformed Benedictines was the Cistercian Order, which originated in 1098, at Cîteaux in the diocese of Châlons-sur-Saône in Burgundy.

In the older monastic Orders all religious houses were controlled by the Bishop of the Diocese, although the bishops themselves were expected to submit to the primate, and the primate to the pope, which condition of affairs became more pronounced as time went on. But the Cistercians accepted no control save that of the General Chapter of Cîteaux, to which all branches were affiliated. How severely this discipline was enforced may be seen in the early history of the movement in England, when abbots were repeatedly deposed for anything that was considered an encroachment on the privileges of the mother foundation. After St. Bernard joined the Order in 1113, the Cistercians obtained from the pope total exemption from diocesan authority for all houses which might thereafter be founded by them in any country. The effect of this departure was to establish monastic settlements outside all diocesan authority, and to repudiate the right of any English bishop to visit Cistercian houses and regulate whatever might be found amiss.

The first Cistercian house set up in England was the Abbey of Waverley, on the banks of the Wey, about two miles from Farnham in Surrey, where William Giffard, Bishop of Winchester, gave the monks a site, and laid the foundation-stone of their house with his own hands. This beginning took place 28th October 1129. The sister-house of Tintern Abbey, Monmouthshire, was founded 9th May 1131. Fountains Abbey, a Cistercian house in Yorkshire,

was established in 1132 by Thurstan, Archbishop of York, and from it in 1145 was colonised Woburn Abbey in Bedfordshire, endowed by Hugh de Bolebec II. The first settlement in Buckinghamshire was made in 1147 at Biddlesden, and the second was at Medmenham. There were no other houses of that Order at any time in this county.

At the dissolution of the monasteries in the reign of Henry VIII there were about one hundred Cistercian abbeys in England, besides a great many nunneries in which the Cistercian rule was observed, and of these numerous houses at least three-fourths were founded in the twelfth century.

FOUNDATION OF MEDMENHAM ABBEY

After founding the Abbey of Woburn Hugh de Bolebec II set out on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and on the return journey he approached Pope Alexander, expressing a wish to do something further for religion. Having obtained the advice of the Pope, Hugh de Bolebec II returned to England about 1160, and came to Medmenham, where "for the remission of his sins" he rebuilt the parish church and also founded Medmenham Abbey, to which he called monks from Woburn. After some time, "when the monks were dwelling in religion there, the said Hugh took the habit of a religious there and lived there after he had taken that habit for five weeks." Before his decease Hugh de Bolebec II endowed the Abbey with a charter :

> Which witnesseth that Hugh for God and the welfare (of his soul) etc. gave . . . to God and St. Mary and the Monks of Woburn Church to build an Abbey of the Cistercian Order the whole manor of Medmenham with its appurtenances in free and perpetual alms etc. So that the said Hugh and his heirs for ever should do the service which belongs to the said manor.
>
> *Curia Regis Rolls*, 92, Mich. 9, and 10 Hen. III (1225), m. 4.

Hugh de Bolebec II, patron of Medmenham Abbey, died there about 1165, and his body was laid to rest in the Abbey which he founded. The monks for a while retained their endowments, then their title was disputed by Walter de Bolebec, brother of the patron, and subsequently by Reginald de Courtenay, guardians of the barony during the minority of the heir. They were supported in this dispossession movement by the authority of Henry II, whose vigorous policy of independence led to the murder of Thomas à Beckett. The claims of the monks were disputed by force of arms, until " by reason of the many ills injuries and molestations " which they suffered from the de Bolebec men-at-arms, the monks of Medmenham were driven out.

> All the monks fled from the place and thus left the monastery empty and (went) to the monastery of Wouborn, so that their mother house might help them, and there remained, and carried with them the bones of their founder from the monastery of Medmeham to the monastery of Wouborn, to pray more devoutly for him, and so not to be unthankful.
>
> *Ancient Deeds*, A. 14647.

This dispute between the monks of Woburn and the de Bolebec family continued for many years. The young heir, Walter de Bolebec II, wished to restore the manor to the monks, but was prevented by Reginald de Courtenay. In 1190 Walter de Bolebec II died, and then the manor of Medmenham became the dower of his widow, Eghelyn de Courtenay, subsequently the wife of Sir Gilbert Basset. Being seized with remorse, and afflicted with grief by the death of her only son, Eghelyn de Courtenay, with the consent of Sir Gilbert Basset, sought permission to restore the manor of Medmenham to the monks of Woburn. Proceedings were taken to enrol a deed of gift. In the year 1201 King John granted a charter confirming the original endowment by which Hugh

de Bolebec bestowed upon Woburn Abbey, in the County of Bedfordshire, the Manor of Medmenham for the maintenance of a cell of the Cistercian Order in that place.

> John by the Grace of God, King of England etc. Know that we for the love of God have granted, and by our present charter have confirmed to the monks of the church of Woburn, for the erection of an Abbey of the Cistercian Order the manor of Mendham with all things pertaining thereto, and with its liberties, which (manor) they had of the gift of Hugh de Bolebec. Wherefore we will, and firmly command, that the aforesaid monks shall have and shall hold the aforesaid manor with all things pertaining thereto, well and in peace, freely, and quietly, and honourably, in church, and in mill, in wood and in plain, to wit, in the meadows and the pasture lands with all things pertaining thereto, and with all its liberties, as the charter of the aforesaid Hugh de Bolebec, which they have thereof, is reasonably testified. Witness — the King, the Bishop of St. Andrews, R. (Robert Beaumont) Earl of Leicester, William de Braiosa, and many others. Given by the hand of S. Archdeacon of Wells, at Selveston (Silverston), the 3rd day of January, in the second year of our reign (1200-01).
>
> *Dugdale's Monasticon* (ed. 1825), vol. 5, p. 684.

About four years after this charter was granted the monks made a new attempt to establish themselves at Medmenham. The Chronicle of Stanley, comprising a history of England down to 1270 written by one of the monks of Stanley, a Cistercian abbey in Wiltshire, contains the following passage, which fixes the second settlement of Medmenham, and also makes it clear why this second attempt also proved disastrous.

> 1204. In this year a new convent was founded in Stanley in Wilts with an abbot of its own, namely the venerable Ralph, July 23, and sent into Ireland into the Province of Ossory to a place called St. Saviour's, which William Marshal, Earl of Pembroke, gave to them—with very many other lands.
> And in this year a new convent went forth from Woburn to a town which is called Medmeham, on the Thames.

> This same year Sir Ralph, Abbot of Stanley was deposed by the Cistercian Chapter because he led the Convent into Ireland without the leave of the Chapter.
> In the same year the convent was recalled from Medmeham and the Abbot of Wuburne deposed for the same reason.
> *Digby MS.* (Bodleian), xi. p. 174.

The concluding paragraph is important and instructive. It is not the unsuitability of the site, or the feebleness of the venture, which condemned the effort to failure, but the fact that the establishment of a community at Medmenham had not received the approval of the General Chapter of the Cistercian Order. In a similar way the Abbot of Woburn was deposed because the very attempt was irregular, and therefore was an act of indiscipline. A subsequent venture with the blessing of the General Chapter of Cîteaux achieved a happier result. Two very old lists of Cistercian Houses, as well as the annals of Louth Park Abbey, Lincolnshire, agree in fixing 1212 as the year of the third colonisation of Medmenham.

The early struggles, as well as the slow progress of those days, were due in part to the unsettled endowment of Medmenham Abbey, also to the fact that the mother-house of Woburn was itself a new foundation, having its own difficulties to solve. While Eghelyn de Courtenay lived, the monks of Medmenham were left in comparative peace, but upon her decease their possession of the manor was again disputed. A writ was sued out against the Abbot of Woburn by Isabel de Bolebec II, the coheir of the barony of Bolebec, and the judgment of the King's Court was sought to decide the situation.

> Isabel de Bolebek Countess of Oxford seeks against the Abbot of Woburn whom the Abbot of Medm'ham calls to warrant 3 carucates of land with the appurtenances in Medm'ham as her right and inheritance and whereof her antecessors died seised and Walter de Bolebek her brother was seised and in which the Abbot had no entry save by Egelina de Courtenay

formerly wife of the said Walter who had no right (therein) save as dower of the gift of the said Walter her husband whose heir the same Countess is.

Curia Regis Rolls 92, Mich. 9 and 10 Hen. III (i.e. 1225), m. 2 ; 104 (Hil. 14 Hen. III), m. 10*d*.

The plea of Isabel, which the records of the Court proceed to recite, was that Hugh de Bolebec, the founder, died seised of the manor of Medmenham, and that Walter his son enjoyed full possession of the same ; that Eghelyn de Courtenay had only a life interest in the estate, and could not bestow it save for her term of years ; also that Constance, sister of Isabel de Bolebec, was dead, and that the same Isabel was left sole heir to the manor of Medmenham. In support of his case the Abbot of Medmenham maintained that the monks had been wrongfully expelled from the manor bestowed upon them by their benefactor, also that he was prepared to settle the claim by an appeal to arms. If Isabel de Bolebec would produce a champion, the Abbot of Medmenham was ready to uphold his case " by the body of some free man of his own " ; or alternatively the Abbot was prepared to refer the question to the Grand Assize of the King.

The legal proceedings which ensued extended over five years. The case was then tried before Sir William Rale(gh) by a jury which recited all the evidence, but left the ownership very uncertain. Sir Stephen de Segrave then appeared. After hearing the facts he adjourned the case for the " coming of the King," and that the rival claimants might talk over a settlement (*loquitur de pace*), with the result that a compromise was eventually effected, which was incorporated in an agreement. According to this settlement the Abbot of Woburn acknowledged the manor of Medmenham to be the property of Isabel de Bolebec, and she in turn confirmed to the Abbot the grant of one carucate of land in Medmenham, also the advowson

of the church, with all land which belonged to the church, saving to Isabel and her heirs certain provisions enumerated.

> Final Concord at Oxford, Easter Day in three weeks, 25 Hen. III (21 April 1241), betw. Isabel de Bolebek, countess of Oxford, petent, and Richard Abbot of Wuburn whom Adam, Abbot of Medmeham vouched to warrant, and who warranted to him, by brother Thomas de Cestresham, a monk put in the place of the Abbot of Wuburne, to gain or to lose, concerning 3 carucates of land in Medmeham etc. To wit, that the abbot of Wuburn has acknowledged all the aforesaid land to be the right of Isabel and rendered it to her in the said court. And for this recognisance etc. Isabel, for God, has granted to the abbot of Wuburn 1 carucate of land of the demesne. To wit, the third carucate of land of the arable land, as Walter de Bolebek, brother of the same Isabel held it, with all pasture as much as belongs to that carucate of land according to the quantity of so much land, outside the enclosure and outside the meadow of Isabel and her heirs. To have and to hold to the abbot and his successors and their church of Wuburn, of Isabel and her heirs in free pure and perpetual alms for ever. And moreover Isabel has given and granted to the same abbot the advowson of the church of the same vill with all the land which belongs to the same church, saving to Isabel and her heirs one road from her court to the same church of the breadth of 20 feet, without impediment of the same abbot and his successors for ever, and saving the order of the same abbot and his successors. So that the abbot and his successors may freely make a wall on either side of the same road to enclose her court. And afterwards the same abbot has granted for himself and his successors and his church of Wuburn that the aforesaid Isabel and her heirs may have a free chapel in their capital messuage of Medmeham. And the same abbot and his successors and their church of Wuburn shall have their road which was assigned to them before Sir William de Ral(egh), and which they had the day on which this concord was made.
>
> *Feet of Fines* (Bucks), Case 15, File 25, No. 39.

In the course of a few years the estates of the Abbey were augmented by a further endowment of half a virgate of land in Medmenham, given by Richard le Boteiler and Juliana his wife, subject to a

yearly pension of twenty shillings to be paid by the abbot during the life of Juliana. A virgate of land is generally reckoned as the fourth part of a hide.

> Final Concord at Westminster. On the morrow of St. John the Baptist, 41 Hen. III (25 June 1257), between Roger, abbot of Medmenham querent, and Richard le Boteiler and Juliana his wife, impediant of the moiety of 1 virgate of land in Medmenham, whereof plea of warranty of charter was summoned between them etc. To hold to the abbot and his successors and their church of Richard and Juliana and the heirs of Juliana for ever, doing therefor foreign service as much as belongs to so much land of the same fee in the same will for all service, custom, and exaction to Richard and Juliana and the heirs of Juliana belonging, and doing therefor to the chief lords of that fee for the aforesaid Richard and Juliana and the heirs of Juliana all the other services which to the aforesaid land belongs. And Richard and Juliana and the heirs of Juliana will warrant to the abbot and his successors and their church the aforesaid land by the aforesaid service against all men for ever. And for this recognisance etc. the abbot has granted for himself and his successors and their church aforesaid that they henceforth shall pay every year to Richard and Juliana for the whole life of Juliana 20*s.* at two terms, to wit, a moiety at the feast of St. Michael, and the other moiety at the feast of the Blessed Mary. And after the death of Juliana, the same abbot and his successors and their church shall be quit of the payment of the aforesaid money for ever. Richard de Clare Earl of Gloucester, puts in his claim.
>
> *Feet of Fines* (Bucks), Case 16, File 34, No. 4.

The rapid growth of ecclesiastical estates excited bitter jealousy on the part of the Crown, and produced the Statute of Mortmain, which prohibited the alienation of land to the Church under pain of forfeiture, except by royal licence. This licence ensured that the Crown got something out of the transaction. The same feudal service was rendered by the Church as by lay holders, and the Churchmen were the better landlords, but the Crown lost on ecclesiastical estates the very valuable profits of wardship and marriage. The Statute of Mortmain, which exacted fees for all

licences of alienation, was an attempt to control a process it could not entirely arrest.

> Westminster 26 June 1285.
> Licence for the alienation in mortmain by John de Bonrugge, to the abbot and convent of Medineham, of a messuage, a carucate of land and 3 acres of wood in Aston Clinton.
> *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1281–92, p. 177.

The abbot and convent of Medmenham, on 18th May 1318, obtained a general licence "to secure in mortmain lands and rents to the value of £10" (*Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1317–21, p. 149). This was a new style of procedure, for the practice hitherto had been to apply for permission to alienate in each particular case. Thirty years passed before the permission was exercised, then within a year of the Black Death the licence was renewed for the purchase of three distinct properties at Fleet Marston, Little Marlow, and Widmer. The next year another licence was obtained for purchases in Borenham and Chippenham.

> Westminster 26 October 1349.
> Licence for the alienation in mortmain to the abbot and convent of Medmenham, in satisfaction of £4 of the £10 yearly of land and rent which they had the late king's licence to acquire, of the following :
> by Hugh de Berewyk, a messuage, 140 acres of land, 10 acres of meadow, 10 acres of pasture, and 2*s*. of rent in Fletmerston.
> by John Budewell, a toft, 40 acres of land, and 2 acres of meadow in Little Merlawe, and
> by Thomas de Wydemer, a messuage, 40 acres of land, 2 acres of meadow and 3 acres of wood in Wydemere.
> The said messuages, toft, lands and woods are of the clear yearly value of 40*s*. 11*d*. as appears by inquisition taken by Thomas Fermbaud, ascheator in the county of Buckingham.
> *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1348–50, p. 409.

> Westminster 10 May 1350.
> Licence for the alienation in mortmain by John Aygnel of Pendele to the abbot and convent of Medmenham, in satisfaction of 6 marks of the £10 yearly of land and rent which they had the late king's licence to acquire, of a messuage and

206 acres, 3 roods of land, 10 acres of pasture, 53 acres, 1 rood of wood and 13*s.* 4*d.* of rent in Borenham and Chippenham which messuage land pasture and wood are of the clear yearly value of 30*s.* as appears by inquisition taken by Thomas Frembaud, escheator in the County of Buckingham.

Ibid., p. 500.

Before these or any other cases of alienation were decided, examinations were first made by a jury, which reported on oath " that it is not to the damage of the King " that he grant permission for alienation, and it is recorded in each case that the benefactors still retained some portion of their lands, which could be charged with the services due to the Crown. These *inquisitions ad quod damnum*, not reproduced here, are of much interest, seeing that they enter into the value of property in the most minute detail.

The abbots of Medmenham never abandoned their claim to the full possession of the manor of Medmenham ; they lost no opportunity of presenting their case to each succeeding territorial lord ; they petitioned the King and his Council to inspect their ancient charters and muniments, and to pronounce against the unjust detention of the manor. They sought every possible means to obtain restitution of what they considered their just rights. They also prepared a catalogue of calamities which had befallen obstructionists who refused to restore their heritage. But their pleadings fell upon deaf ears. Their case was never reopened. The monks of Medmenham never possessed more than a fraction of the parish of Medmenham, and to the end of their days the manor of Medmenham was to them no more than the land of promise.

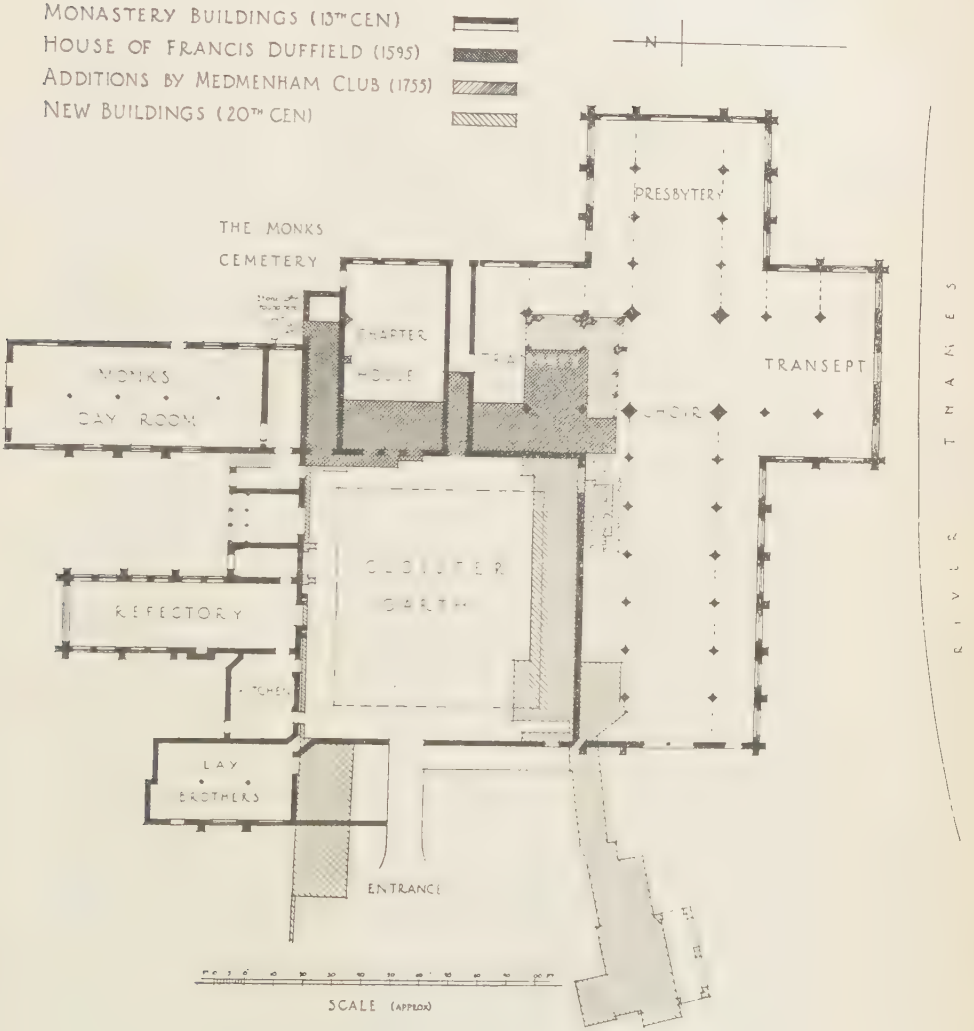
THE BUILDING OF THE MONASTERY

The peculiar constitution of the Cistercian Order provided for the regular visitation of all the monasteries of the Order by the abbot of their mother-

house, and the institution of the annual General Chapter of the Order did much to secure similarity of observance. These causes also produced a remarkable uniformity in the planning of Cistercian houses, so that, given the main points of their architectural features, it becomes comparatively easy to reconstruct the outlines of their monastic buildings. According to their statutes, twelve monks with an abbot were to be sent to each new foundation, and a new settlement could only be established when certain buildings were ready to receive the monks. The first buildings at Cîteaux, and of most other new foundations, were of wood. Following this example, the first settlement at Medmenham was also of a temporary character. Only gradually did more permanent buildings arise as the exchequer of the monastery permitted. The actual craftsmen were the lay brethren, or the hired workmen, acting under the direction of two experienced monks, and their building was done so well that the strength of a Cistercian wall became proverbial.

For sixty years the monks of Medmenham dwelt in temporary quarters. Their tenure during that time was most unsettled. Once they were driven out by the de Bolebec family. On another occasion they were recalled by their own General Chapter to Woburn. In the reign of Henry III permanent buildings began to appear. The King granted to the abbey of Medmenham, 7th April 1232, a free gift of twenty-five trees from the forest of Windsor, " as well oak trees as beech trees." Some thirteen years later the abbot was given similar permission " to have one or two boats on the waters of the Thames for carrying stones for doing works on his own house," from which we may gather that in 1232–45 building work was in progress. The permanent buildings of Medmenham arose contemporary with those of Tintern Abbey.

MEDMENHAM ABBEY · BUCKINGHAMSHIRE



To face p. 168.

Both of these monasteries were planned on similar lines, except that the later abbey church of Tintern was of more ample proportions. The process of building Medmenham Abbey probably started in 1232, and finished about 1280. It may here be remarked that Roger Bigod, Earl of Norfolk, who caused Tintern Abbey to be built, was connected by marriage with Aubrey de Vere, husband of Isabel de Bolebec I.

The abbey church of Medmenham was of cruciform shape, facing east and west, where now a lawn extends between the south front of the house and the river. It was twice the length of Medmenham parish church, and more than twice the width, the dimensions being about 160 feet by 60 feet, not reckoning the depth of the transepts. During some alterations at Medmenham Abbey in 1921 part of the foundations of this building were uncovered, and were afterwards measured. A careful study of these remains, with the undoubted position of the cloister garth, and the fragments of ancient masonry which still survive, compared with the standard plan of thirteenth-century Cistercian houses, has enabled us to reproduce the approximate outline of Medmenham Abbey as it existed during the Middle Ages. According to the general rule of the Order the church was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The plan of a Cistercian church was framed to meet the practical necessities of their worship. In the sanctuary at the east end was the high altar. On the east side of each transept were chapels where the monks who were priests might celebrate Mass. The eastern part of the nave formed the choir of the monks, while the western part was the choir of the lay brethren. On each side of the nave was an aisle to facilitate communication between different parts of the church. Part of the north outside wall of the nave has been incorporated in the river frontage of the present main buildings, terminating to the

eastward in a round pier of flint rubble. One of the columns of the nave has been re-erected on a base of modern brick north-east of the existing house. It is formed of four keeled rolls, separated by two rolls and a large fillet. The bell capital has undercut mouldings and a scroll-moulded abacus. This evidence of design suggests it is of the late thirteenth century, which would correspond with other ascertained facts concerning the building of the church.

The daily existence of the small community was gathered up in the abbey church. This building itself was a monument to the glory of God, and the services endeavoured to interpret the same lofty conception of worship. At the altar the monks regularly celebrated Mass according to the use of the Cistercian Order, and every day the canonical hours of prayer were observed. The daily services were *Nocturnes*, soon after midnight, then *Prime*, *Terce*, *Sext*, *Nones*, *Vespers*, and *Compline*, at the first, third, sixth, ninth, eleventh, and twelfth hours of the day, reckoning from six o'clock in the morning. The services consisted of prayers, psalms, canticles, and lections from Holy Writ and the Fathers. On Sundays and Holy Days special forms were prescribed.

There was no tower to a Cistercian church, no painted walls, only white glass in the windows, and no statuary or pictures, except the image of the Virgin and the Redeemer, so that " the discipline of religious gravity " might not be neglected. Later generations may have departed from these strictures, but the simplicity of the early Cistercians is undeniable. The doors of the church only could be painted white. On the west door of the abbey church was the sanctuary knocker, where fugitives might hammer for admission. So long as they remained under the protection of the abbey they were immune from arrest, until they could forswear the realm. It was part of the custom of

clerical privilege in an age when the Church stood for the rights of the people, and it furnished at least some protection against the hasty execution of fatal injustice.

The courtyard of Medmenham Abbey to-day was the cloister garth of the thirteenth century. Around it were gathered the principal buildings; on the east was the chapter-house, adjoining the north transept of the church; the south cloister had a door opening into the north aisle of the nave; on the north and west of the cloister were the domestic quarters—refectory, kitchen, lavatory, and dormitories. The abbot's quarters and the guest rooms were generally in the western part of the buildings.

THE ABBOTS OF MEDMENHAM

The abbot of the monastery, the head of the community, was appointed by the monks in chapter. He was elected by vote, selected by compromise, or chosen by acclamation, and the approved candidate was not of necessity a member of the particular body. Once elected, the abbot was proclaimed in church, and a solemn *Te Deum* was sung. He was then expected to pass an examination as to his ecclesiastical attainments, after which the election was confirmed, and with great ceremony the new abbot was installed.

No complete account exists of the abbots of Medmenham. Any proceedings of their chapter possessed by the abbey must have perished in the upheaval following the dissolution of the monasteries. It is only possible now to trace here and there the names of twelve abbots of Medmenham, who in their generation were masters of the house:

Adam	appears	1241
Roger	,,	1256
Peter	,,	1295
Geoffrey	,,	1318 1321

John	appears	1333
Robert de Redyng	,,	1367
Stephen of Thame	,,	1373
Henry	,,	1416
Hugh Kyngesley *alias* Berdmore	,,	1510
Richard	,,	1521
John Talbot	,,	1535
Richard Brangwen or Brangwell	,,	1536

There is no impression of the seal of Medmenham Abbey now surviving. A number of writers have unconsciously perpetuated an error of the historian Browne Willis, who confounded the seal of Medmenham with Mendham in the county of Suffolk. The latter shows the Blessed Virgin Mary seated on a throne, under a canopy supported on slender shafts, with the Holy Child on the left knee. In the base, under a trefoil arch, a shield of arms, on a fesse three plates for William de Huntingfield, the founder (of the Cluniac Priory of Mendham). Brother John of Mendham, whose superscription appears on the seal described, had nothing whatever to do with Medmenham. As a matter of custom most abbeys possessed two seals, one of the abbot for his personal or official use, and the other of the chapter for documents requiring the general consent of the community. One fact of interest is that the Abbot of Medmenham was Epistoler to the Order of the Garter, and the duty of his office was to read the Epistle in the Annual Service of the Order at Windsor on the Festival of St. George. Some part of the original abbey church was standing until the middle of the eighteenth century, and the arms of St. George—argent a cross gules—remained there until then, linking up Medmenham with the Order of the Garter, and witnessing to a long-departed honour.

BRETHREN OF THE ORDER

The leading brethren in such a community were of that class which for many hundred years has given its sons to the Church and the learned professions. An abbot who could not talk and write in Latin with facility, preach with tolerable fluency, hold his own in debate, and who did not possess business instincts, would soon have found himself in an impossible position, from which he would have been glad to escape by resignation.

THE DAILY LIFE OF THE ABBEY

The monks rose in the morning early, performed their ablutions on the cold stone pavement of the lavatory, and took their places in church at six o'clock for *Prime*, which was followed by a meeting in the chapter-house to discuss the temporal affairs of the Abbey, to hear confessions and correct faults. A chapter of the Rule was always read, and from that practice the name of the compartment is derived. The convent afterwards attended Mass. Then came breakfast in the refectory, and *Terce* in church. Afterwards they dispersed to their several duties. If the day were one of special obligation, work was suspended, and High Mass was celebrated. All the brethren were expected to assemble in church for the Canonical Hours of Prayer—unless excused by dispensation—and in the refectory for the daily meals. At the high table, on a dais at the east end of the refectory, sat the abbot with his principal officers, and at the lower table assembled the monks. The meal began with the grace of the Order, repeated by the lector for the week, and while the company ate in silence the same brother read passages from devotional works. The motto of the Cistercian Order was "Renunciation and Work." Every man in the community had his particular post, and every officer had his special department to govern. There were the prior,

the disciplinarian of the house next to the abbot; the sub-prior; the cantor; the sacrist; the cellarer —an inspector of flocks and herds, as well as an overseer of corn bins and beer barrels; the refectorian; the kitchener; the infirmarer; the almoner; the novice master; the *vestiarius*, who was the laundryman and tailor, and the guest master. In the smaller foundations certain duties might be combined, but any well-managed house was a hive of industry. As long as the Cistercians were loyal to their early simplicity they revealed new ideals in religion, and incidentally they were pioneers in good farming. Their lands were cultivated by the *conversi*, or lay brethren, who were admitted to the community under vows similar to those of the monks, and by paid labourers, because according to their Rule the monks were expected to confine themselves to the occupations of the cloister.

The dress of the Cistercian Order consisted of a white cassock, with a narrow scapulary, all of undressed wool, fastened round the waist by a cord. Over this dress a black gown was worn for going abroad. No dyed garments were allowed, because the dyeing of wool was considered an unnecessary superfluity. The effect of their black and white habit gained for Cistercians the name of Grey Monks.

Within the abbey grounds, just where the library window now looks across the drive, was the cemetery, in charge of the sacrist. No weeds were allowed to grow there, the edges of the walks were to be trimmed, and the grass to be well-kept. The more distinguished members of the community were buried in the chapter-house or in the cloister. The body of the brother, shrouded in the habit of his Order, was conveyed to the grave on an open bier, and there interred. When persons of rank were buried a similar course was pursued, but stone coffins were occasionally used.

The coffin was placed in the grave before the funeral, and the body, clothed in the richest dresses of the deceased, was carried to the grave and therein deposited. The abbots, as well as other ecclesiastics of rank, were dressed in ceremonial vestments, generally with the ring and other insignia of their office, and sometimes with chalice and paten.

To grasp the real inwardness of all that the monasteries represented, it is necessary to remember that religion in the Middle Ages was intimately entwined with the whole social structure. The life of the nation came to manhood under the dominant influence of the Church, and subsequent generations of materialistic tendency have never eradicated that hereditary instinct. The boy of the Middle Ages was taught to read and write in the monastery school. Early in life he placed himself under the guardianship of a patron Saint. In his trade, craft, or profession of arms, he dedicated his service with religious vows. If he wished for the special favour of Heaven he went on a holy pilgrimage. In the event of sickness he visited the healing waters of streams reputed to be endowed by the saints with miraculous qualities. One of these was St. Winifred's Well, to which pilgrims wended their way through Medmenham. There were three springs of that name, the most famous being at Holywell, North Wales, while others existed at Woolston, Salop, and at Oxford. The last-named was no doubt the destination of travellers who lodged at Medmenham Abbey on the journey. St. Winifred's Well at Oxford was said to cure all kinds of diseases—ulcers, leprosy, cancer, blindness, or lameness—but its actual accomplishments have never been placed on record.

THE STORMS OF MISRULE

An incident which marked the hundredth anniversary of the third foundation of the Abbey will illus-

trate the spirit of riot and disorder which then prevailed throughout the country. In the confusion and unrest created by famine and misrule, people settled their own differences, and collected their own debts, rather than wait upon any painful and uncertain delays of the law. The abbot of Medmenham at that time joined the company of rioters, and turned housebreaker. His differences appear to have been satisfactorily adjusted, for Sir William de Montacute, whom he plundered, not long afterwards conveyed to him the advowson of the Church of Dungate.

York 3 February 1312.
Commission of oyer and terminer to Henry Spigurnel, John de Foxle, and John Neyrnuyt, on complaint by William de Monte Acuto, that the abbot of Medmenham and William Sagar with many others forcibly entered his manor of Dunrugge co. Bucks broke his houses, felled trees in the wood of the manor and carried away the trees and the timber of his houses and other goods to the value of £100.

Cal. Pat. Rolls, 1307–13, p. 470.

Westminster 16 September 1312.
Licence, after inquisition *ad quod damnum* taken by Roger de Wellesworthe, escheator on this side Trent, for the alienation in mortmain by William de Monte Acuto to the abbot and convent of Medmeham of the advowson of the Church of Dungate, held in chief.

Ibid., p. 496.

THE BLACK DEATH

As the years passed by, so the community became more firmly established. The Cistercians were famous for their sheep- and cattle-breeding, wool-growing, and horse-rearing. They carried on a great trade in wool, which was the leading industry of the nation, yet they were frequently in difficulties. Much of their wealth was carefully and wisely spent on improving the monastic estates, in hospitality to wayfarers and pensioners, and for relief of the poor, but a great part

went in litigation, and elaborating their houses. They were burdened with all the cares of investments to the exclusion of spiritual ideals, with the result that the writer of history wanders through a perfect maze of charters, licences, and grants; of agreements, commissions, and quitclaims; many of them involving considerable negotiations, and all of them incurring some amount of expense.

To meet this constant drain on the monastic exchequer, the abbot and convent were obliged occasionally to borrow money on security of their goods. The following instances are just specimens of a number of other similar transactions not permanently recorded.

> Langley 22 March 1316.
> The abbot of Medmeham acknowledges, for himself and his convent, that he owes to Richard de Chissebech £20; to be levied, in default of payment, of their lands and chattels in the county of Buckingham.
>
> *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1313–18, p. 329.

> The Tower 2 October 1321.
> Brother Geoffrey, abbot of Medmenham, acknowledges, for himself and his convent, that he owes to William de Leyghton Busard parson of the church of Swathefeld £30; to be levied in default of payment, of their lands and chattels in co. Buckingham.
>
> *Ibid.* 1318–23, p. 501.

> Brother Robert de Redyng Abbot of the Monastery of Medmenham comes before the Barons of the Exchequer 1 May 41 Ed. III (1367) and acknowledges himself bound to William de Hauleye parson of the Church of Mersh in 100*s*. Afterwards he paid the same as on 20 Nov. next William acknowledged before the Barons.
>
> *Memoranda Roll* (*Exchequer King's Remembrance*) *Recognisances*, Easter, 41 Edw. III, No. 143.

The Black Death of 1348 dealt a serious blow to the monasteries. The abbey of Meaux, a Cistercian house in Yorkshire, during the visitation lost by death four-fifths of its members, and much the same con-

ditions prevailed in Buckinghamshire. The abbey of Medmenham had been in difficulties before the great plague, and after the pestilence the liberal gifts of pious patrons ceased to flow. The change, of course, was gradual, but Medmenham Abbey never recovered from the shock of those years. The community was thinned in number, faced with scarce and dear labour on the land, and, in common with other places, had fallen from their great ideals.

THE BURDEN OF HOSPITALITY

There can be no doubt that over-spending had much to do with the decline of many Cistercian houses. Some abbots were not skilled in finance, some were improvident, and some were grossly extravagant. Far too much was spent in lavish entertainment of great folk, who travelled with bands of retainers, while the constant stream of humbler people was itself a serious tax. The abbey of Medmenham was a hospital for pilgrims, as well as a guest house for derelict travellers. The throng which drew up for hospitality at night was made up of all sorts and conditions. No one was turned away. In the days when there were no newspapers, and the abbey was the news centre of the neighbourhood, the retainers at night must have listened to many curious and startling tales.

The pensioners of the monasteries also were many and various, from the beggar who sat at the convent gate to the poor relations of the founder's family, who imposed upon their hospitality. An example of this is found in Sir John Meryok and his wife, who succeeded about 1370 in establishing themselves as permanent guests at Medmenham Abbey until they were driven out by the flood.

> Richard Fitzalan II was made Earl of Arundel after his father, and would not restore that manor to the monks but gave the daughter of his elder brother aforesaid (viz.) Sir Edmund to

Sir John Meryok knight in marriage, giving to them and their heirs the aforesaid manor of Medmenham. But the same knight with his wife and household dwelt in the same monastery of Medmenham for about two years, bringing much damage and trouble to the Abbot and monks, and about the end of the two years there was so great an inundation of the water of the Thames that it filled the houses, cellars and rooms where the aforesaid knight lived, and the waters encroached on the roads, so that food could not come to him, and thus, driven by necessity, he fled to Henley and did not return any more.

Ancient Deeds, No. A.14647.

THE COSTS OF LITIGATION

But it is doubtful if all the expenditure on hospitality exceeded the waste from constant litigation. The monasteries were always at law, not only with bishops and country parsons, but alike with barons and bailiffs. Nor were these quarrels confined to the contests of abbots for the good things of the world: sometimes the humble monk himself invoked the oracle to be absolved from the world.

Westminster Palace, 24 February 1371.

Protection for John Ingram of Wroxston, sometime monk of the monastery of Medmenham of the Cistercian diocese, who, withdrawing from the society of man and choosing to live a solitary life in a cavern or hidden place called "Swannersnest" by the Tower of London, where he waits upon the Most High in quietness, has been disturbed by the ordinary.

Cal. Pat. Rolls, 1370–74, p. 51.

The small community at Medmenham was certainly affected by money troubles of a kind—the result of several contributing causes, rather than the effect of any one particular condition. Towards the close of the Hundred Years' War, in which England lost most of her Continental possessions, and while desperate subsidies were being raised by the Crown, Medmenham Abbey and a number of other religious houses were exempted from payment by certificate of the Bishop of Lincoln in the following terms:

All goods, benefices, and ecclesiastical possessions of the Monastery of Medmenham on account of diverse mischances.

Subsidy of November, 1435.

DEALINGS IN THE ABBEY ESTATES

In the course of years glimpses are gained here and there of negotiations for the sale of abbey lands, and of titles reaffirmed, but the records available for reference are insufficient to keep track of a never-ceasing series of changes. The first of the following extracts deals with the lands and tenements sold to Sir Ralph de Wydyndon; the second refers to the manor of Orynge, which was disposed of by the abbot and chapter before the visitation took place, about 1535, preceding the dissolution of the monastery.

To all and singular our tenants of Derneden, to the Lady Prioress of Merlewe, John son of Robert son of Walter de Cyppenham, Thomas Lambert of Bekenesfeld, Simon Salvage of the same, Martin son of Roger Chapman of the same, Walter Boyville of the same, Robert atte Hethe of the same, Richard atte Holeweye the younger, Adam Schrapie of Burnham and Robert Thomas of Dorne, Geoffrey by divine permission Abbot of Medmenham and the Convent of that place, Greeting eternal in the Lord. Know that we have given granted and confirmed to Sir Ralph de Wedon knt, all our lands and tenements with the rents and services of all our tenants and with all the appurtenances in Dernedene. Wherefore we beg of you and by these presents ordain that you should be intendent upon, and should answer to, the aforesaid Ralph and his heirs and assigns or executors touching all your rents and services whatsoever according to the meaning of an indenture between us made. In witness whereof our common seal is to these presents attached.

Given at Bekensfeld Sunday the feast of St. Osyth the Virgin in the year of the reign of King Edward son of King Edward the twelfth (8 October 1318).

[No seal remains.]

Campbell Charter, X. 8, British Museum.

Writ, Westminster 1 April
3 Hen. vij (1488).

Inq. taken at Lynchelade co. Buck. 18 April 3 Henry vij (1488) before William Cary escheator by the oath of John

Bluet, William Emberton Richard Steuenys, Henry Wauer . . Thomas Kerondale, John Wygge, John Colyns, Henry Clerk, Henry Collys, William North, William Shelfho, John Tommys and John Whyte who say that Richard Enderby knight held the day on which he died the manors of Orynge and Ledbourn in co. Bucks in his demesne as of fee and of such a state died thereof seised. And that the manor of Orynge is held of the abbot of Medmenham by service of 1*d.* rendered yearly and it is worth yearly beyond reprises £3. And the manor of Ledbourn is held of the king. . . .
And Richard died 19 Sept. last past (1487) and John Enderby is his son and next heir and is aged 13 years.

Chancery Inquisition post mortem, Series 11, 3/36.

THE CROWN AND THE PAPACY

One ingenious form of mediæval taxation was the granting of pardons. The privileges and legal exemptions of the monasteries were therefore regarded as renewable rights, involving the necessity of a periodical general pardon. In that way the monasteries obtained security for their ancient privileges, and the royal exchequer was replenished. The pardon in itself was a stereotyped form, written in general terms, without any reference whatever to actual historical facts. In a bewildering list of general pardons granted by Henry VIII in 1510 the following entry appears :

Hugh Kingsley *alias* Berdmore, abbot and the convent of Medmenham, 1 March.

In the year 1516 an example occurred of the kind of outlay on legal disputes which exhausted the treasury of so many monasteries. It arose in the accounts of John Evans, bailiff of Medmenham manor for Henry, Lord Montacute.

The said John asketh allowance for the expenses of divers suits that the Abbot of Medmenham had against my lord Montagu as by the said book appeareth 20*s.* 0. [*About* £20 *modern currency.*]

The Abbot of Medmenham was evidently the plaintiff in these cases, but as his records have perished posterity is denied the satisfaction of criticising the endless legal disbursements of this small religious community. The divers suits named in the record may have been another attempt by the monks to obtain possession of the manor.

The exactions of the papacy as time went on grew more and more extortionate, while the demands of the Crown for supplies were unceasing. From Richard I to Henry VIII every monarch and every pope levied frequent toll on the industry of the monastic houses. In the year 1522 Cardinal Wolsey resorted to arbitrary taxation. A forced loan was assessed throughout the whole kingdom to meet the expenses of renewing the war with France, but the response was exceedingly feeble. The Bishop of Lincoln was assessed for £1000. The contribution required from the Abbot of Medmenham on the same occasion was £20, described as :

> An Annual grant, to be made by the spirituality, for the King's personal expenses in France for the recovery of the crown of the same.

It is doubtful if the Abbot of Medmenham contributed his allotted share towards the forced loan. What is far more certain is that the exhausted condition of the national treasury turned the thoughts of the Chancellor to the possible dissolution and disendowment of religious houses.

THE SUPPRESSION OF MEDMENHAM ABBEY

Cardinal Wolsey in 1525 contemplated the suppression of a number of religious houses, including Medmenham Abbey, and bestowing their lands on a College which is now Christ Church, Oxford. It was part of a policy of centralisation. The monks of the smaller houses were to be concentrated in the larger

establishments, where better and more economical government prevailed, and their endowment was to be used for the spread of learning. In 1528 a papal bull of Clement VII gave sanction to these proposals, but, possibly owing to the opposition of the Pole family, the scheme so far as it applied to Medmenham Abbey was never completed, and for a few years the monks were left in peace.

> Westminster 4 January 1524 (i.e. 1524–5).
> Commission from Wolsey to William Gascoign knight, William Burbank Doctor of Laws and Thomas Cromwell gent, to survey the monasteries of Tykford, Ravenston, and Poghley, Medmenham, Wallingford, and Pynchinbroke, *alias* Hinchingbroke by Huntingdon, with their revenues converted to the uses of Cardinal's College Oxford.
>
> *Wolsey's Patents*, 23/1.

The above Commission is remarkable in that one of the Commissioners was Thomas Cromwell, merchant, lawyer, and money-lender, the son of a blacksmith at Putney. Thomas Cromwell in 1523 was returned to Parliament, and about that time also entered the service of Cardinal Wolsey. After the downfall of his master, which Cromwell himself assisted to accomplish, he became Vicar-General to Henry VIII. Sir William Gascoigne, named in the same Commission, was Treasurer of Wolsey's household; while Dr. William Burbank was Archdeacon of Carlisle. The latter dissolved the monastery of Tichford, Buckinghamshire, 5th February 1524–5, and several other houses of religion.

Between the years 1524 and 1528 Wolsey suppressed twenty-nine of the smaller religious houses with less than £200 a year. All of these except four were of the Augustinian or Benedictine Order, and none of them were Cistercian houses. For one thing the latter were under stricter supervision, because they were controlled by the General Chapter of the Order,

although there was a common tendency everywhere to relax discipline. The number of monks at Medmenham Abbey in its best days is uncertain, but was probably never more than forty. What certainly happened, both here and elsewhere, was, that as outside demands on the abbey treasury grew more insistent, and the standard of monastic life became more luxurious, so membership of the Order was reduced, and the general efficiency of the community in consequence suffered. Although the community in its latter days was small, the Abbot of Medmenham still retained his full dignity. In 1529 he appeared as member of Convocation of the Province of Canterbury representing the Archdeaconry of Buckinghamshire.

Before the Abbey was disbanded, and while there was much confused thinking in England concerning the future of the Religious Orders, at the joint request of the abbots of the English houses the General Chapter of Cîteaux in 1531 decided upon a visitation and inspection of the Cistercian houses in this country, sending for that purpose the very learned and virtuous Abbot of Chalôns. But reformation of the monasteries was not what Henry VIII wanted, because already he had plans for their appropriation. The King never allowed the Abbot to make the visitation, alleging that no one had the right to interfere in the affairs of his kingdom, and saying that within his dominions he was at once king, emperor, and pope. Shortly after the Act of Supremacy became law in 1534, a Commission was issued by Henry VIII for the visitation of certain Cistercian houses. Up to that time the Cistercians had recognised no discipline other than that proceeding from the authority of the parent foundation. The said Commission was given to the Abbot of Ford, and in the list of houses attached to the warrant appears the name of Medmenham Abbey.

VISITATION OF THE ABBEY

Thomas Cromwell received his appointment, 21st January 1535, as Visitor-General of all the churches and monasteries, with power to nominate commissaries under him, to ascertain the first-fruits and tenths due to the King which had hitherto been rendered to the Pope, and with a view to the dissolution of the smaller monasteries. The work did not begin until the summer. Both the King and his minister visited a number of the religious houses, but most of the work was done by four agents: Dr. Thomas Legh, one of the well-known family of Leghs of Lyme; John Ap-Rice, a Welsh lawyer; Ven. Richard Layton, Archdeacon of Buckinghamshire, and afterwards Dean of York; and Dr. John London, a native of Hambleden, Buckinghamshire. The latter possessed the benefices of Ewelme and Adderbury, and held also prebends in the Cathedrals of Lincoln and York.

The immediate effect of this visitation was to thin the religious houses of their inmates. The agents were invested with authority to dispense with monastic vows and to disperse the inmates. In some cases the members were given permission to go abroad, while in others only the old and infirm were left to keep up the practice of the religious life. Margaret Vernon, prioress of Little Marlow, had her house almost emptied. The same process appears to have been repeated at Medmenham, where at last only two monks remained, one of whom was Guy Strenshill, while the other was the Abbot.

Simultaneously with the visitation a complete survey was made of the temporalities and spiritualities held by all parishes and monasteries. According to this valuation, which was for estimating first-fruits and tenths, the abbey of Medmenham was returned to be worth a clear £20 6*s*. 2*d*., equivalent to about £400 a year of modern currency. The several properties of the Abbey are enumerated in the following schedule:

THE MONASTERY OF MEDMENHAME WHERE JOHN TALBOTTE IS ABBOT AND INCUMBENT.

Value of the Temporalities in the County of Buckinghamshire.

Little Merlowe.		
Value in rents and ferms there by the year . . .	£4 0s. 9d.	
Fletmerston and Blakegrove.		
Value in the ferm of the manor there by the year . . .	60s.	
Tyrefeld.		
Value in rents of assize there by the year	15s. 4d.	
Hamelden.		
Value in rents and ferms there by the year	41s. 8d.	
Medmenhame.		
Value in rents and ferms there by the year with 42s. for the demesne lands remaining in the hands of the incumbent .	£7 8s. 8d.	
Sale of woods there worth in the average year . . .	20s.	
Sum of the temporal possessions aforesaid by the year .		£18 6s. 5d.

Spiritualities in the County of Buckinghamshire.

Rectory of Medmenhame.		
(Worth) in the average year .	100s.	
Oblations of the box within the monastery worth in average years	26s. 8d.	
Impropriate tithes of the demesne lands worth in average years	4s. 1d.	
Sum of the spiritual possessions by the said year . .		£6 10s. 9d.
Sum total of the value as well temporal, as of spiritual possessions belonging to the aforesaid monastery of Medmenhame by the year		£24 17s. 2d.

Reprises issuing yearly from and out of the possessions of the Monastery of Medmenhame.

To wit in Temporalities.

Rent Payments.

And in rent paid to divers persons for certain lands issuing from the possessions aforesaid by the year, to wit, to the King 3*s.*, to the prior of St. John 2*s.*, to the prioress of Marlowe 19*s.*, to the heirs of Master Ramesey 16*s.*, and to Lord Scroope 10*s.*, In all .		50*s.*
Official fees.		
And in the fees of William Chalfount steward there by the year	6*s.* 8*d.*	
And in the fee of (————) bailiff there by the year .	26*s.* 8*d.*	
		33*s.* 4*d.*
		£4 3*s.* 4*d.*

Spiritualities.

Procuration and Synodal.	
And in money paid to Richard Leighton, archdeacon co. Buck, for procuration and synodals by the year . .	7*s.* 8*d.*
Sum total of all the reprises and deductions temporal and spiritual in respect to the Monastery of Medmenhame by the year	£4 11*s.* 0*d.*
And thus it is worth clear by the year	£20 6*s.* 2*d.*
Whereof is due to the Lord the King for the tenth part	40*s.* 7½*d.*

Valor Ecclesiasticus (Record Commission), iv. 257.

Before the visitation was completed a measure was brought before Parliament on 4th February 1536, entitled " An Acte concernynge the suppression or dyssolucon of certeyne Relygyous houses and given to the kinges highnes and to his heres for ever." This bill without any great opposition became law. It provided for the dissolution of all houses " where the congregation of such religious persons is under the number of twelve," also that dispossessed monks were to be distributed among the greater houses, and that superiors were to be given a pension according to their degree.

At the same time was passed an Act for establishing a Court of Augmentations, which set forth that, as the King now had secured to him the lands and other assets of the houses to be suppressed, all such property should be handed over to a Court of Record consisting of certain officials duly named and appointed. The next procedure was to appoint commissioners to take possession of the disbanded monasteries. This was done without delay. One of the most active commissioners in Buckinghamshire was the notorious Dr. John London, whose extensive correspondence with Thomas Cromwell on the business of suppression still survives. The commissioners who took the surrender of Medmenham Abbey reported :

> This Monastery was of the Order of St. Bernard, the clere value £20 6*s*. 2*d*. ; monks there, two ; and both desyren to go to Houses of Religion ; Servants none ; Bells etc. worth £2 6*s*. 8*d*. ; the house wholly in ruin ; the value of the movable goods £1 3*s*. 8*d*. ; Woods none ; Debts none.

A diligent search for the original copy of this Deed of Surrender has up to now failed to discover the document. The more exact terms would probably disclose by whom the survey was made, and to what commissioners the Abbey was surrendered. In his *History of Abbeys* (1719) Browne Willis quoted the

above particulars, but made no reference to the authority from which his information was derived. St. Bernard in his day was one of the great leaders and reformers of the Cistercian Order, so that houses of that foundation were commonly identified with his name.

THE ABBOT OF WOBURN

Some of the Cistercian houses did not so peacefully accept the new order of things. One of these was the Abbot of Woburn. When commanded to surrender to the King the papal bulls in his possession, as well as the foundation charters of Woburn and Medmenham, he kept copies of them in case there might be an agreement, by the mediation of princes, between the king and the pope, in which case the copies would have been useful to his monastery. He was tried at Lincoln for treason in joining the Pilgrimage of Grace, and, having been taken in arms and found guilty, he was hanged on an oak before the gate of Woburn Abbey. The foundation charters of Woburn and Medmenham, which figured prominently in the trial, have nowhere been traced in surviving records.

THE LAST ABBOT OF MEDMENHAM

Under the Act for dissolving the lesser monasteries more than two-thirds of the Cistercian houses were suppressed. Their inmates, as a rule, were transferred to other greater houses of the same Order. The fate of the last monks of Medmenham is not known beyond the fact that the Abbot soon after the dissolution was granted a pension.

2 July 28 Henry VIII (1536).
Grant to Richard Brangwen, abbot of Medmenham, at the time of the dissolution, of a yearly pension of 10 marks for his life.

Augmentation Book, 232, pt. 1, fo. 20b.

The last abbot of Medmenham was a careful man. As soon as the dissolution of his house became tolerably certain, he immediately collected all the money he could extract from the tenants, and used it to settle his debts, consequently on his first round the bailiff for the Crown was left " high and dry." The bailiff therefore sought exoneration from the Court of Augmentation, and obtained it in these words :

> And of £8 17*s.* 4*d.* Of which they discharge him because Richard Brangwell (*sic*) formerly abbot of the said late monastery received the same sum from the tenants there before the dissolution to the use and for the expense of the guesthouse of the same. . . . And so he is quit.
>
> *Ministers' Accounts*, Henry VIII, 234.

DISPOSAL OF THE ABBEY ESTATES

The rush for the spoil at once began. Baron and squire put forward claims for lands given by their ancestors to the Church, and anyone who could muster the smallest plea for recognition, as well as many with no excuse whatever, became suppliants to the Vicar-General for his favour. On 10th May 1536 the greater part of the premises lately belonging to the priory of Medmenham and situated in that parish was granted to Thomas More, groom of the cellars to the King, on a twenty-one years' lease at a rental of £7 17*s.* 8*d.* a year.

The rest of the endowment of the abbey of Medmenham, except the outlying portions in Little Marlow, Fleet Marston and Blakegrove, and Turville, was bestowed upon a new foundation at Bisham, and it included " the house and site of the said Priory of Medmenham," also sundry lands and tenements in Medmenham, as well as the holding in Hambleden, and the advowson of the parish church of Medmenham. The priory of Bisham had been surrendered to the Crown in July 1536, but after its

dissolution " King Henry's new monastery of the Holy Trinity " was established in the old buildings, 18th December 1537. This new community was endowed with lands of the late-dissolved abbey of Chertsey, and with possessions of the priories of Cardigan, Bethkelert, Ankerwyke, Little Marlow, etc., to the value of nearly £700 a year. It was a short-lived institution, for the foundation only lasted to 17th June 1538, when it was surrendered into the King's hands at the beginning of the suppression of the larger monasteries.

The rectory of Medmenham, i.e. the rectorial tithes, was granted in June 1536, by the Crown to the monastery of Abingdon, in exchange for land at Westminster, and in April of the following year the same tithes were leased to the above Thomas More. When the monastery of Abingdon itself was suppressed in February 1538 the rectory of Medmenham again reverted to the Crown. Three months later Thomas More obtained from the Crown a lease for twenty-one years to himself and his son Robert, of the rectory and church of Medmenham, lately belonging to the monastery of Abingdon, with the advowson of the parish church of Medmenham, which had been bestowed upon the monastery of Bisham. The outlying lands in other parishes were gradually disposed of by the Court of Augmentations to sundry purchasers.

The property in Little Marlow consisted of certain lands let to John Lonewye, and a place or mansion in the same parish leased to Walter Boreham and his wife by indenture dated 24th July 1533 for thirty-one years. These were disposed of with other premises, 6th November 1540, to John Chaundeler, citizen and goldsmith, of London (*Pat. R.* 32 Hen. VIII, pt. 7, m. 7).

In Turville the abbey of Medmenham held " all that rent of 15*s.* 4*d.* and the services of all those customary tenants in Tyrfeld and all those messuages,

lands, etc., commonly called customary lands in Tyrfelde." Whatever may have been represented by these assets became in December 1540 the property of Michael Dormer, Lord Mayor of London (*Ibid.* pt. 8, m. 5).

The farm of Fleet Marston and Blakegrove included certain lands let to Sir Robert Lee by indenture dated 21st June 1531 for fifty-five years at 60*s.* a year. In 1545 this property was granted by the Crown to Lord John Russell, K.G., afterwards 1st Duke of Bedford, who sold it the same year to Sir Anthony Lee for the sum of £61 10*s.* (*Ibid.* 37 Hen. VIII, pt. 9, m. 23, and *Addl. Charter*, 1954).

The premises at Hambleden belonging to the abbey of Medmenham were a tenement called Pheasants, leased to Ralph Ley by agreement dated 1st December 1517 for twenty-nine years at 26*s.* 8*d.* a year, and 15*s.* rent from a parcel of grove let to Walter Grey.

THE SALE OF MEDMENHAM ABBEY

Some purchasers of monastic property paid as much as twenty years' rent for their possessions, but others succeeded in getting their lands at much lower rates. Sir Richard Gresham paid £7000 for Fountains Abbey, equivalent to twenty years' purchase, but Richard Wills, a nephew of Thomas Cromwell, acquired Romsey Abbey for £5000, which represented only about three years' purchase. In the scramble that followed the dissolution many, such as Lord John Russell, were mere speculators, selling the property again at enhanced prices. Woburn Abbey, granted in 1547 to Lord John Russell, has ever since been the home of the Earls of Bedford. In spite of the easy terms on which much of the land was sold, the Crown agents had great difficulty in collecting the money. On the death of Henry VIII a balance of £76,141 8*s.* 3*d.* was still unpaid.

GRANT TO THOMAS MORE

Some few years after leasing the lands from the Crown, Thomas More and Robert More his son purchased the freehold of the property at Medmenham. At the same time they acquired the rectory of Medmenham, which Thomas More had rented from the Abbot of Abingdon, also certain lands of Medmenham Abbey which had been granted to Bisham Abbey, and the Hambleden estate of the monks of Medmenham, which since the dissolution had been retained by the Crown. For these properties they paid a lump sum of £258, equivalent to twelve years' rent. The terms of this grant are comprehended in the following document :

> Whereas the King, by indenture under the Great Seal of the Court of Augmentations made between the King on the one part and Thomas More of the Royal Household gentleman on the other part, dated at Westminster 10 May, 28 Hen. VIII, granted and let to farm to the said Thomas the house and site of the late Priory of Medmenham co. Bucks, together with all the houses buildings barns gardens orchards dovecotes land and soil within the site or precinct of the late Priory and all the lands tenements cottages meadows and pastures belonging to the late Priory and written below, viz. 28 acres land in a certain great field there, one several field called Cherslande (6 acres), one close called Waybrokes (2 acres), a parcel of meadow in Charlemeade (3 ac.) one acre in le Grett Meade, a tenement with a barn at Hallywykes, a close called Oldefelde (4 acres), a field called Chappell Felde (12 acres), Fystle Feld (8 acres), Horham Felde (10 ac.) 3 closes of land called Upcroftes (11 ac.), 3 closes called Croftes (8 ac.), a close called le Hill (5 ac.), 2 crofts called Bramell Crofts (2 ac.), a close called Dybden (4 ac.), 1 acre of meadow in Charle Meade, 1 acre in " le Comen Meade," 5½ ac. meadow in le West Meade, West Feld Close, and also four " les Yattes " [*eyots*] in the water of the Thames there together with freedom of fishing and fowling there, and with pasture for 6 cows among the cattle of Lord Montague and his tenants within his lordship there. And also 6 acres and one " le butt " lying in le Farre Townfelde, 4 acres in le Hyther Townfelde, 4 acres on le earthe Pytte, 6 acres of arable land in " les Strettez " there, a close called Wyers crofte (10 ac.), 8 acres in Bery Downe and Bery Dene, and a cottage in Medmenham then in the tenure of Roger Davy

and a cottage in Medmenham then in the tenure of Robt. Symonds with a close of land (2 ac.), and also 7 acres in Bokmarfeld, a close called Waters Crofte (3 acres), Greyes Close (4½ac.), a close called Wydefeld (7 acres), 1 acre in le Nether Long Down, a cottage in Medmenham with a close (1 acre), a parcel of meadow in le Grett Meade late in tenure of [ ] Taylour widow, a cottage with a garden in Medmenham late in the tenure of Ralph Purslowe, and a cottage with a garden and close in Medmenham late in tenure of Ralph Barnecote together with all commons liberties and commodities thereto belonging from Michaelmas last before the date of the indenture for 21 years, paying to the King, his heirs and successors £7 17*s*. 8*d*. yearly

Now, for £258 paid by Thomas More and Robert More, son of Thomas, the King grants to Thomas and Robert (1) the reversion of the premises, and (2) the yearly rent of £7 17*s*. 8*d*. and also all the house and site of the said late Priory of Medmenham formerly to the late monastery of Bisham co. Berks, now dissolved, belonging, and all houses, buildings etc. etc. within the said site, and all the lands, cottages, meadows, feedings and pastures let to the said Thomas in the above indenture, and also (3) all the messuage called Phesaunts and the lands, meadows, feedings, pastures and hereditaments in the tenure of Ralph Lye in Medmenham (*sic*), late belonging to the monastery of Bisham, also 6 cottages in the several occupation of Ralph Warden, Christopher Purslau, Richard Barnecote, the widow of John Flexman deceased, William Edmonds and John Braye in Medmenham late belonging to the monastery of Bisham, land called Grey late in the tenure of Thomas Grey in Hamelden parish co. Bucks, late belonging to Bisham monastery, and all the lands, meadows, pastures etc. in Medmenham late belonging to Bisham monastery and (4) the rectory and church of Medmenham late belonging to the monastery of Abingdon co. Berks, now dissolved, the advowson, donation free disposition and patronage of the Vicarage of the parish church of Medmenham co. Bucks late belonging to the monastery of Bisham, and all messuages, houses, barns, stables, dovecotes, orchards, gardens, feedings, pastures, glebe lands, tithes, oblations, obventions, pensions and portions and other profits etc. in Medmenham belonging to the said rectory and church (5) all woods and underwoods in the premises (6) and all reversions and rents reserved

As freely and entirely as the Abbot of Bisham and the Abbot of Abingdon ever held the same.

The site of Medmenham Priory and the messuages etc. late belonging to Bisham Monastery are worth £9 19*s.* 4*d.* yearly ; the rectory of Medmenham and the advowson of the vicarage with the premises appurtenant are worth £4 16*s.* 8*d.* yearly.

To hold to Thomas and Robert their heirs and assigns for ever to hold of the King in chief as 1/40 of a knight's fee and paying for the site of the Priory 20*s.* and for the Rectory 2*s.* 4*d.* into the Court of Augmentations.

Thomas and Robert to be saved from all dues save only 3*s.* 4*d.* from the Rectory of Medmenham due to the Archdeacon of Bucks for procurations and synodals yearly etc.—24 Sept. 38 Hen. VIII, 1546.

Originalia Roll, 38 Henry VIII, Part 2, m. 17.

The waters and fishery of the Thames from Westmeade (Westfield) to Medmenham Meade, which had been the property of Medmenham Abbey, were not included in the sale to Thomas and Robert More, evidently for the reason that the rights had already been leased to William Rice of Bockmer. The purchasers of the Abbey lands acquired in their negotiations only the four eyots in the waters of the Thames, with the fishing and fowling there. The waters and fishery of the river were not granted out of the Crown until they were leased thirty years later to Henry East. For about twelve years the endowments of the Abbey remained in possession of Thomas and Robert More, until on 8th February 1559, Thomas being then deceased, licence was granted by Queen Elizabeth to Robert More to alienate to James Duffield and Frances his wife all his rights to the said late monastery of Medmenham in any way belonging.

The decay and ruin into which the Abbey premises were falling had been expedited by the Royal wreckers, who, when the monasteries were disbanded, proceeded to realise the value of the building materials. Lead was stripped from the roofs, and bells were melted down for making guns. Tiles, timber, windows, and doors were all disposed of by the Crown agents, who toured

the country completing the work of destruction. The buildings themselves were sold piecemeal, as in the case of Medmenham Abbey, where, after the fabric had been gutted of the more saleable assets, all the house and site remaining passed with sundry vicissitudes into the possession of James Duffield, whose son Francis reconstructed a portion of the building into a domestic dwelling.

THE SANCTUARY KNOCKER (*see* p. 170)

CHAPTER VII

MEDMENHAM ABBEY

(FROM THE DISSOLUTION OF THE MONASTERY)

" When the lamp is shatter'd,
The light in the dust lies dead ;
When the cloud is scatter'd,
The rainbow's glory is shed ;
When the lute is broken,
Sweet tones are remember'd not ;
When the lips have spoken,
Loved accents are soon forgot."

The Flight of Love

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY (1792–1822)

Much of the spontaneous verse of Shelley, the Marlow poet, was written on an island near Medmenham Abbey, the poet's favourite retreat. The *Hymn of Pan* breathes just the atmosphere of these surroundings. Shelley journeyed to and from Medmenham in his boat *Vaga*.

CHAPTER VII

MEDMENHAM ABBEY

(FROM A.D. 1559)

A NEW career of domestic tradition for Medmenham Abbey opened with the arrival of James Duffield, who claimed descent from the ancient and honourable family of that name, but the exact connection is somewhat obscure. The family name is derived from the township of Duffield, about 5 miles out of Derby. The principal branch for a long period owned land at Kirby Malzeard, Grantley, and Burton Leonard, near Ripon, with a genealogy extending back to the reign of Edward II. Another offshoot migrated to Ireland. In the early part of the sixteenth century some of the family were merchant citizens of London, one as a master carpenter and another as a mercer ; and these in turn were related to others of the name at Chalfont St. Giles in Buckinghamshire.

The link connecting this disjointed family is the fact that the Duffields of Medmenham Abbey, who apparently belonged to the Buckinghamshire contingent, displayed the same coat of arms as the Duffields of Ripon and Ireland, and adopted the same motto—*Esto semper fidelis*.

The Duffields who flourished at Medmenham possessed all the impetuous nature and temperamental inequalities of the Celt. James Duffield, the first arrival at Medmenham, sprang into prominence through his marriage with the daughter of a distinguished and wealthy family in Northamptonshire. His successors likewise kept their position by a series of fortunate marriages, rather than by careful living or

the love of industry. Each generation produced the same strain but a different type. Sometimes prodigal and generous, often mad and impulsive, and always fond of a fight, the Duffields provide as diverse a study of human nature as could be desired in any single family.

JAMES DUFFIELD, 1557–85

The first step before James Duffield could take possession was for Robert More, the surviving partner of the original conveyance, to apply to the Crown for permission to alienate Medmenham Abbey and its appurtenant lands to James Duffield and Frances his wife, except that portion which had already been transferred to Ralph Godfrey, of Great Marlow.

For this formality the Crown extracted £2 13*s.* 11½*d.*, and for the actual freehold James and Frances gave 260 marks, representing £173 6*s.* 8*d.* in the money of that day, and equivalent in purchasing power to about £3500 present currency. The following licence was thereupon granted :

> Touching a licence to alienate for Duffyld.
>
> The Queen to all to whom etc. Greeting. Know ye that we of our special grace and for 53 shillings 11½*d.* to us paid in our hanaper have granted and given licence and by (these) presents do grant and give licence for us our heirs and successors so much as in us lies to our beloved Robert Moore Gentleman that he may give enfeoff sell alienate bargain and grant either by fine to be levied in our court before our Justices De Banco acknowledge, or in any other manner, all that site circuit and precinct formerly of the dissolved Monastery of Medmenham in our County of Buckinghamshire and all and singular the manors messuages lands tenements meadows feedings pastures woods underwoods common water rents reversions and service and also his other hereditaments whatsoever together with all their appurtenances and members of all kinds to the said late monastery of Medmenham in any way belonging or appurtaining or as part or parcel of the premises or parcel of any one of them heretofor had known or reputed

together with all that rectory and church of Medmenham aforesaid and with their lands tenements tithes pensions portions oblations offerings profits commodities and hereditaments whatsoever to the said Rectory in any way whatsoever belonging or appurtaining and together with the advowson and presentation and free disposition of the vicarage of Medmenham aforesaid. All and singular which premises with the appurtenances are lie and exist in the parish fields or hamlets of Medmenham aforesaid (except and altogether reserved all those messuages lands and tenements and hereditaments whatsoever late bargained or granted by the aforesaid Robert to a certain Ralph Godfrey of Great Marlowe in the said our county of Buckinghamshire to him and his heirs) which are of us held in chief to our beloved James Duffield gentleman and Frances his wife To have and to hold to the same James and Frances and the heirs of the same James and Frances and the heirs of the same James to the only and proper use and behoof of the same James and Frances and the heirs and assigns of the same James for ever of us our heirs and successors by the services therefor due and by right accustomed. And likewise we have given and by [these] presents do give special licence to the same James and Frances that they may receive the aforesaid site manors messuages lands tenements and all and singular other the premises with the appurtenances (except the beforeexcepted) from the aforesaid Robert and hold [them] to themselves and the heirs and assigns of the same James of us our heirs and successors aforesaid by the services aforesaid as is aforesaid for ever in accordance with [these] presents. Wishing that neither the aforesaid Robert nor his heirs nor the aforesaid James and Frances nor the heirs or assigns of the same James should by reason of the premises be by us our heirs or successors whomsoever therefor summoned molested disturbed vexed or in any way annoyed nor that any one of them should be therefor summoned molested disturbed vexed or in any way annoyed. In (witness) whereof etc. *Teste* the Queen at Westminster the eighth day of February.

Pat. Roll, 1 Elizabeth, Part 1, m. 4.

James Duffield had married Frances, daughter and heir of Richard Knightly and Joan his wife, of Falwesley, Northampton, Richard Knightly being himself son and heir of Sir Richard Knightly. The child of this marriage was Francis, born and baptised

at Medmenham, 1557, which was some little time before James Duffield purchased the Abbey with its appurtenant lands.

During the thirty years he lived at Medmenham James Duffield occupied the Rood House, which had once been the property of Geoffrey Pole, of Wittington. This house James Duffield renamed the Priory, the same being now the house and grounds known as the "Manor House." It belonged at that time to William Rice, from whom James purchased the property in 1584. Francis Duffield was born in this house, the first heir to the Abbey lands for more than three hundred years, and in 1562 John Duffield and Francis Duffield both died there. The latter were presumably the brothers of James, dwelling together in tribal fashion with the more prosperous member of the family. According to the inquisition taken after the death of James Duffield, the house and site of the late priory of Medmenham seem to have undergone no change, but still remained as when they were in possession of Robert More.

Since the occupation of the Duffield family began, the outlying lands of Medmenham Abbey never continued for any considerable period a constant quantity. Additional property in the neighbourhood was purchased as the rising tide of the family fortunes permitted ; parts were exchanged, divided, or sold, as convenience or necessity required, and only a very imperfect account can be traced of the many changes which took place.

By an indenture dated 20th November 1576, James Duffield exchanged some part of his possessions with William Rice, lord of the manor of Medmenham, in return for " a messuage where Robert Readinge junior formerly dwelt in Medmenham " and sundry closes of land named elsewhere. The same James Duffield and Francis his son acquired from William Rice and his

wife Barbara, by deed of 8th April 1584, "all those houses called reade house kytchyn, then in the tenure of Richard Dobson, and a messuage called Woodende," also certain closes and groves named in the document, "paying to Ryce and his heirs 48*s*. 2*d*. yearly."

FRANCIS DUFFIELD, 1585–1612

In the following year, on 7th April 1585, James Duffield died, leaving no will. The property then passed to Francis I his son, who had just turned twenty-seven years of age. The first marriage of Francis Duffield had been with Jane, daughter of Nicholas Britton, of Leicester, by whom he had two children, James who died young, and Jane who became the wife of Francis Worley, of Dodford, Northants. His second marriage, in 1594–5, was to Alice, daughter of Robert Andrew, of Harlestone, Northamptonshire. On the occasion of the latter union Francis Duffield effected a settlement giving preference to any surviving issue of that marriage in the distribution of the estate. There were four children of this marriage—Knightly, Robert, Edmund, and Francis—all of whom outlived their father.

One of the principal acts of Francis Duffield was to make the Abbey into a three-story dwelling. The process of conversion was extremely simple. He pulled down the domestic quarters of the monks north of the cloister, and demolished most of the Abbey church. He cut away the east front of the chapter-house range, making there a new frontage on an E-shaped plan. By this means he made the maximum use of existing materials, and he disturbed the fabric so little that it is comparatively easy to reconstruct the Cistercian Abbey from the traces which have survived. The arrangement on an E-shape is generally considered to have been a tribute of devotion to Queen Elizabeth, just as H-shaped houses marked

the reign of earlier Tudor monarchs. The new east doorway had moulded jambs, with a square head surmounted by a square label. The upper stories had mullioned windows with moulded jambs and heads. Above the lintel of the entrance was a diamond-shaped panel with the arms of the Duffields : Sable, a chevron argent between three doves. The storms of centuries have wiped out the heraldry, but the shield still remains. The doves in the device were a play on the family name.

Some portion of the south aisle of the monastery church, about 48 feet by 12 feet, abutting on the south wall of the new building, formed part of the Tudor mansion, and it remained standing until the eighteenth century. It served as a domestic chapel. Dr. Hearne remarked (*c.* 1700) that the remaining four pillars which supported the aisle were very handsomely wrought, that the windows were large, and the whole ruins indicated that the monastery church was built of very good square-hewn chalk. About the middle of the eighteenth century the chapel was restored and dedicated to the fantastic worship of the Medmenham Club.

The outline of the Elizabethan house is still preserved on the east front of the existing house. It was completed by Francis Duffield before 1595, because " Le Abbey Priory or Monastery of Medmenham " was mentioned that year in his marriage deed as a capital messuage. In the same document he refers to another principal messuage as Le Grange House, and also a messuage called The Priory. The last-named house, where Francis Duffield had been born, was let to Richard Redworth when Francis moved into his new home.

Upon succeeding to the family property Francis Duffield I enlarged his borders by purchasing parcels of land from Robert Scrope, of Hambleden, and

Richard Bold, of Harleyford. From the latter he bought 24 acres in the Great Medmenham Meadow. His second marriage brought him more capital, and he then acquired lands from Robert Day, of Hambleden, Sir William Borlase, and also from John and Thomas Ebson. The principal purchase was Hollywick Farm, which in his will Francis accounted a "full third parte of all ye said farmes, messuages, etc., whereby the King may take wardship, livery, and seisin." The rest of his acquisitions were scattered in many directions.

Shortly before his death, necessity obliged Francis Duffield to raise a mortgage (8th August 1612) of £1000 on all his freeholds. This amount he borrowed from Thomas Andrew, his brother-in-law, on an undertaking to repay within a certain period. By another indenture two days afterwards (10th August 1612) Francis demised the said properties, except the meadow acquired from Richard Bold, "to Thomas Andrewe and Edward Simeon, until the majority of any son or heir male of Francis at a yearly rent of £10."

ALICE DUFFIELD, 1612–41

Francis Duffield I died 24th August 1612, bequeathing to his next heir "and to his heirs for ever the farm called Hollywyxe in Medmenham in the tenure of John Est": the residue of his real estate passed to the trustees for his son, and his goods, chattels, and leaseholds to his wife Alice. There were other sundry benefactions, including 20*s*. and 40*s*. to the poor of Medmenham and Marlow.

The estate of Francis Duffield, which fell into guardianship, was divided by the trustees between the widow and children of the second marriage. The son Robert died in May 1629, leaving a will containing this remarkable provision:

> I am to have foure hundred pounds porcon with my wife from her father. I give that foure hundred pounds to her and fowerscore pounds more which I think is a reasonable or sufficient porcon for her, because I have had her soe little a while.

The testament of this recently-married assessor-of-nuptial-damages, who regarded his helpmate as so much shop-soiled goods, was disputed by the widow Elizabeth, but the Court pronounced in favour of the will. Other bequests in the same will were to his brothers, Knightly and Edmund, to his servants, and to his mother Alice as residuary legatee. He also desired that Mr. Barnard should preach at his funeral, for which he was to receive the sum of twenty shillings.

After the decease of Alice Duffield in 1641, her real estate fell to the eldest son, Knightly, as well as the residue of her personal effects, subject to certain bequests. These included fourteen memorial rings to her nearer relations ; " to Mr. Joel Barnard, Vicar of Medmenham, £5 0*s.* 0*d.*" ; to certain beneficiaries her wearing linen, gowns and petticoats, also an everlasting provision for " five of the poorest people dwellinge in Medmenham."

> The gowne and petticoate which I give to my sonne Edmund Duffields wife is my best damaske gowne and damaske petticoate which is redd.
> I give and bequeath unto five of the poorest dwellinge in Medmenham fiftie shillinges a yeare for ever to bee given and bestowed upon such poore people in clothes by my heirs and the Churchwardens of Medmenham yearely to bee given upon All Sancts Day tenn shillinges to euerie one of the five poore people to the worlds end, which fiftye shillinges a yeare is to bee payd forth of the land which I did purchase of my Cozen Mr. John Farmer the land lyinge in Great Marlowe.

There is some evidence that a hundred years later a pension of £5 a year was being paid out of the Abbey lands to the vicar of Medmenham, but nothing whatever to show that the poor in any way benefited by the annuity. Mr. Francis Duffield about 1750

declined to continue the payment to the vicar. The gift was never enrolled on the Charities Register, nor can the piece of ground on which it was charged now be identified.

KNIGHTLY DUFFIELD, 1641–65

Two incidents connected with Knightly Duffield are of uncommon interest. About the year 1635 he made extensive alterations to the Priory, or Rood House, once occupied by James Duffield, which then came into use again as a dower house for the family. In her will Alice Duffield expressed the following desire :

> I entreate my sonne Knightly Duffield that his brother my sonne Edmund Duffield may dwell at his new house in Medmenham dureing his life giveing and payinge him rent as any other will give.

The second outstanding feature was the trial of Knightly Duffield in 1637 for killing and slaying one William Tebott :

> Inquisition taken at Staines in County Middlesex 10 June 13 Chas. I. before Henry Harriott gentleman one of the King's Coroners of the said county upon the view of the body of William Tebott there lying dead and killed by the oath of William Fitzharbert and others (named) lawful men of Staines and of four other towns in the said county adjacent thereunto Who being sworn to enquire in what manner when and how the aforesaid William Tebott came to his death say upon their oath that a certain Knightly Duffield late of Staines aforesaid gentleman not having God before his eyes but moved and misled by the instigation of the devil on the eighth of June 13 Charles I. by force of arms aforesaid feloniously assaulted William Tebott then being in the peace of the said lord king. And the aforesaid Knightly Duffield with a certain sword (*cum quodam gladio de ferro*) and "*calibe* called a Rapier" worth two shillings which he then and there had and held drawn in his right hand struck the said William in the left thigh and pierced through the said William (*pupugit dans eidem Willelmo*) and then and there with the drawn sword aforesaid [inflicted] on the said William a

mortal wound six inches in depth and one in width of which mortal wound the aforesaid William Tebott then and there immediately died. And thus the Jurors aforesaid say on their oath that the said Knightley Duffield feloniously killed and slew the aforesaid William Tebott on the eighth of June 13 Chas. I. at Staines contrary to the King's peace etc. What goods and chattels lands or tenements the aforesaid Knightley Duffield had at the time of the said felony and manslaughter (*homicidium*) the jurors know not.

King's Bench, Ancient Indictments, File 809, Pt. II, No. 125.

Certain picturesque touches of this indictment make it interesting, notably that the rapier was worth two shillings, also the reminder that the goods and chattels, lands, and tenements of a murderer were generally valued, seeing that they were forfeit to the Crown. The rapier was appraised, because if the death proved accidental the rapier became *deodand*, being given to the Church to pray for the unshrived departed soul.

Knightly Duffield lodged a petition, 9th July 1637, against the consequences of his rash deed, " most humbly showing that it was his hard misfortune unwillingly to kill " William Tebott. He was finally acquitted under an ancient Benefit of Clergy Statute, which provided that no person in Holy Orders should be sentenced by a Civil Court on a criminal charge, save for an offence against the Forest Laws. This benefit was extended to all persons who could read from the book as a clerk.

Pardon to Knightley Duffield for the death of Tebott.

Whereas on Tuesday after the Quindene of Holy Trinity aforesaid there came before us the said Knightley Duffield in the custody of the Marshall of our Marshalsea and pleaded guilty to the said felony and manslaughter (*homicidium*) and threw himself upon the King's mercy, whereupon, being asked if he knew anything whereby the court should not proceed to judgment, he said that he was a clerk and pleaded benefit of clergy and read from a book as a clerk.

Now the King pardons the aforesaid Knightley Duffield late of

MEDMENHAM ABBEY

(A moonlight picture)

"A GREAT measure of its charm lies in its remarkable history. A house once consecrated to the development of the race, and for generations hallowed with intimate domestic memories, also sometime dedicated to the worship of strange gods, can never lose its old associations. They cling to the place, and give it a distinction all its own" (*see* p. 234).

To face p. 208.

Staines gentleman provided he give good security (in accordance with the Act of 10 Edw. III) for his good behaviour. *Teste* the King at Canbury, 11 Aug. 13 Chas. I.

Pat. Roll, 2755, 13 Chas. I, Pt. 6, No. 18.

About the year 1628 Knightly had married Sarah, daughter of Andrew Field, of London, grocer, and by her he had four children : Francis II, Sarah, Andrew, and Mary. The mother Sarah died and was buried, 1st September 1654, at Medmenham. The eldest son, Francis II, was a barrister-at-law. He died in the Middle Temple, London, at the age of thirty-five years, and was buried, 13th December 1664, at Medmenham.

Without doubt Knightly was something of a tyrant. None of his children dared marry while he was living, and even after his death only one ventured on the Elysian fields of matrimony. This was the younger daughter, Mary, who on 30th July 1683 was married in Medmenham Church to Robert Smith, of Stepney, merchant. Twenty years later Mary had bestowed her bereaved affections upon one of the Hebrew nation, for she was then the wife of Jacob Isaacson, as well as the last survivor of her generation.

The elder daughter, Sarah, was smitten with a passion for a certain Richard Wilson, towards whom her father conceived a violent prejudice. Even in his will Knightly threatened dire penalties if Sarah married the man or bestowed upon him any legacy, so she ploughed the lonely furrow to the end. Sarah died at Medmenham in 1704 an old maid, greatly beloved in the village, when the administration of her modest goods fell to her sister Mary. A large dark-coloured stone slab with the following epitaph, now illegible, marks her resting-place in the churchyard against the east wall of the sanctuary :

Here lyeth the Body of Sarah Duffield daughter of Knightly Duffield Esquire of Medmenham Abbey in this parish, who

departed this life the fifth day of August, Anno Domini 1704.
Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all.—*Prov. xxxi. Chap.*

Knightly Duffield died in 1665, and by his will, dated 19th June that year, left his estates to his son Andrew, after paying legacies of £700 to Sarah and £600 to Mary, also sundry small bequests to household servants and the poor of Medmenham and Marlow. The legacy to Mary was unconditional, but the amount to Sarah was " provided she doe not intermarry with one Richard Wilson." If the personal estate could not discharge the legacies the executor was to sell certain properties, including " two closes of arable lands at Woodend, lately taken out of the Common and purchased of Sir William Borlase (25 acres)." The latter piece of plunder must have represented quite a valuable chunk of common land.

ANDREW DUFFIELD, 1665–87

The character of Andrew Duffield is best summed up in the words of one of his own family: " He lived at the Abbey, grew rich, was given to generous hospitality, and died an old bachelor." Andrew had a great regard for the honour of his distinguished house, and although he had no children for the propagation of his sentiment he took elaborate precautions that the family name should not perish. Even the domestic furniture after his decease was to " continue and remaine as a Standarde in the house and go from heire to heire." But, alas! for the vanity of human desires, within threescore years and ten every stick of furniture was swept away and the house itself was converted into a pagan temple.

By his will, dated 4th May 1687, Andrew Duffield left the Buckinghamshire estate to his cousin, Francis Duffield III, or next heir, on the condition that any

successor took the name of Duffield. The house in London, which he had acquired, went to Sarah and Mary in survivorship, afterwards descending with the Buckinghamshire estate. There were bequests to relatives and servants; to John Gilbert, Vicar of Medmenham, £5; to the poor of Medmenham, £5; and of Marlow, £5; and memorial rings without number.

> My neighbour Sir John Borlase bart. a ring of 20*s*.
> I give and bequeath the number of threescore rings the value of each ring Tenne shillings to be given amongst my Relations.
> To every Master of a family within the parish of Medmenham a ring to the value of eight shillings.

FRANCIS DUFFIELD III, 1687–1713

The cousin, Francis Duffield III, to whom Medmenham Abbey passed on the death of Andrew, was the eldest son of Edmund, the younger brother of Knightly Duffield. This Francis married Mary, widow of Henry Gooding, of Latchford, near Great Haseley, Co. Oxon, and they had four children: Francis IV, Edmund, Elizabeth, and James. The father died, and was buried at Medmenham, 14th May 1713, being ninety years of age, when the property passed to his eldest son, Francis IV.

In this branch of the Duffields the wild characteristics were developed, which brought the family to ruin. The complaint was not peculiar to the Duffields. It was the spirit of the age, but the Duffields seem to have been uncommonly susceptible. People became dull in conscience, apathetic in religion, immoral in private life, brutal in nature, and neglectful of their common obligations.

FRANCIS DUFFIELD IV, 1713–28

Francis IV for his wild pranks was known as "Mad Duffield." He is credited with many extravagant feats

of gallantry, but any record of the particular achievements has perished. His son Edmund referred to him as a man of great prowess, having tamed a mad bull. He was a stout and handsome man, who delighted much in horse-racing. If death had not checked his wild career in the forty-fourth year of his age, Francis IV would have squandered the whole estate on his excesses. As it was, he left the property diminished in extent and encumbered with mortgages. This scion of the ancient and honourable family possessed no wife, but took unto himself a mistress, Elizabeth Mills, his housekeeper, and she became the mother of Francis V, John, James, Edmund, Elizabeth, and John, of whom the elder John died in childhood.

His own son, Edmund, writing of Elizabeth Mills, said : " She is a tender mother : an indulgent Mrs : and a good friend. She was strictly loyal to the man that had ruin'd her. He settled 15 Pounds a year upon her for life." The latter amount was to be paid out of the property in the tenure of John Benwell. Francis IV died May 1728, leaving his remaining estate in trust for his natural son, Francis V, subject to mortgages for the maintenance of James, Edmund, and Elizabeth.

> To my friends John Freeman of Fawley Court Co. Bucks Esq. and Anthony Lybbe of Checkingdon Co. Oxon Esq. all my messuages lands tenements and hereditaments in the counties of Bucks, Middlesex, Essex and the City of London, or elsewhere in trust for Francis Duffield my natural son begotten by me on the body of the said Elizabeth Mills and the heirs male of his body, and in default to my heirs, subject to raise out of my estates or by lease sale or mortgage thereof or of any part thereof by cutting down wood and timber (1) £300 each for my said natural children James, Edmund, and Elizabeth, for their maintenance, education, binding them apprentices to lawful trades, and setting them up to trades at the age of 21 or sooner. (2) £50 each to the said trustees John and Anthony for their own separate uses for their trouble.

These dispositions were contested by James Duffield, of Golders, Co. Oxon, brother of the deceased, but the will was upheld. Probate was granted, 9th August 1728, to Anthony Lybbe, power being reserved for John Freeman, but on the death of Anthony Lybbe three years later administration was granted to Elizabeth Mills, John Freeman having renounced. The children of Francis Duffield IV and Elizabeth Mills are of more particular interest because they were the last of their race to be laid to rest in the parish where they were born.

FRANCIS DUFFIELD V, 1728–58

Francis V was a well-favoured youth of massive stature and affable disposition, having large dark-blue eyes, sturdy and high-spirited, but sometimes severe and passionate. He was a born soldier; he delighted in horses; and he was the best of brothers. In features and temper Francis rather resembled his mother, but in the ways of extravagance he pursued the broad road to ruin trodden by his father. He was a bold gallant and a jolly companion, fortunate in his affairs, and among other accomplishments he had an excellent taste for painting. A commission was purchased for him as Lieutenant in the Horse Guards Blue, and in that capacity he served in 1743 with King George II in the Flanders Campaign.

The second son Edmund was a giant in stature, being six feet four inches in height, but lean, narrow-chested, and sickly, having outgrown his strength. In appearance he was much like his father, with large grave eyes. He was devoted to music and art, of scholarly nature, a lover of solitude, fond of poetry and dancing. Among other incumbents of Medmenham Edmund is an outstanding character.

Their sister Elizabeth was a girl of some charm, the twin of Edmund, but of peculiar temperament.

DUFFIELD OF MEDMENHAM ABBEY*

ARMS: Sable, a chevron argent between three doves, beaked gules.
Motto: "Esto semper fidelis."

William Duffield.

- John Duffield, bur. at Marlow, 1597.
- JAMES DUFFIELD, of Le Rood House, or Priory; bought the Abbey, 1557; *d.* 1585. = Frances, dau. and h. of Richard Knightly, of Falwesley, Northants.

(1) FRANCIS DUFFIELD I, of the Abbey (1557–1612); born at the Priory. = Jane, dau. of Nicholas Britton, of Leicester.

(2) = Alice, dau. of Robert Andrew, of Harlestone, Northants; *d.* 1641.

- James, *d.* young.
- Jane = Francis Worley, of Dodford, Northants.
- KNIGHTLY DUFFIELD, of the Abbey (1598–1665). = Sarah, dau. of Andrew Field, grocer, of London.
- Robert, *d.* 1629.
- Edmund, *m.* Dorothy Bovington, of Woburn.
- Francis. — 4 daughters.

- Francis Duffield II, barrister; *d.s.p.* (1630–1664).
- ANDREW DUFFIELD, of the Abbey; *d.s.p.* 1687.
- Sarah, *d.* at Medmenham, 1704.
- Mary, *m.* (1) Robert Smith, of Stepney, merchant; (2) Jacob Isaacson.

FRANCIS DUFFIELD III, of the Abbey, eldest son; *d.* at Medmenham, 1713. = Mary, wid. of Henry Gooding, of Latchford, Oxon.

Edmund, of Oxford.

- FRANCIS, "MAD DUFFIELD," IV, of the Abbey; *d.* 1728.
- Edmund.
- Elizabeth, *d.* 1753.
- James Duffield, of Golders, Oxon.

Children by Elizabeth Mills, who survived.

- FRANCIS DUFFIELD V, Lieut. in the Blues; *d.* at the Manor House, 1758.
- John, *d.* young.
- Edmund Duffield, vicar of Medmenham; bap. 1724; *d.* 1759.
- James, *d.* 1761.
- Elizabeth, bap. 1724; *d.* 1762.
- John.

Children by Elizabeth Robins.

- FRANCIS DUFFIELD VI, Capt. in the Royal American Regt.; sold the Abbey. = Lady Elizabeth Birmingham, dau. of Thomas, Earl of Louth; divorced from Thomas Baily Heath Sewell in 1779.
- Knightly Duffield, drowned in St. George's Channel.

* Based upon evidences cited in the text. Names in SMALL CAPITALS denote owners of Medmenham Abbey.

Table No. VIII.

Her mental balance had been upset in her teens by an unhappy love affair with John Frewer, Vicar of Medmenham, who afterwards resigned the living. She survived all her brothers except John, the youngest.

James Duffield was his mother's darling, but the scapegrace of the family. Of lower stature than his brothers, " a votary of Venus and a worshipper of Bacchus," he quickly ran through the money left to him, and for the most part spent his time " among a set of scoundrels " at the Dog and Badger. A letter written from Oxford by Edmund Duffield, reproduced in the Appendix, fully confirms this impression.

John was the general favourite of his brothers, and the youngest of all. He was clever at mathematics, a skilful fisher, a diligent farmer, extremely popular in the village, industrious in his habits, and of a gentle nature. John was not born until about the time of his father's death, and for that reason did not benefit in the division of the estate, but his brothers Edmund (*d.* 1759) and James (*d.* 1761) each bequeathed to him their possessions by will.

FOUNDATION OF MEDMENHAM CLUB

The love of Francis V for the fine arts brought him into touch with kindred spirits, and particularly with Sir Francis Dashwood of High Wycombe. These associations led to the foundation of the Medmenham Club, which was a society of dabblers in art and literature. Out of compliment to their founder they called themselves " The Order of St. Francis." The rites of initiation into the Club were a burlesque of sacred things, and the meetings were for the most part riotous and intemperate revels. Their excesses even in a dissolute and profligate age became notorious to such an extent that in the publications of the day the Society was lampooned as the " Hell Fire Club."

At that time Medmenham Abbey was leased to

the members of the Club. The situation provided everything that was desired. Beautiful woods, soft meadows, a crystal stream, and a grove of venerable elms near the house, with the seclusion of the Abbey itself, made it as refreshing a retreat as the most poetic imagination could conceive. The first cost of transforming the house was provided by Sir Francis Dashwood, and he entrusted the work to Nicholas Revett of Brandeston, an eminent architect, who was also responsible for the rebuilding of Sir Francis Dashwood's home at West Wycombe Park, and for the restoration of West Wycombe Church. All these architectural works are in the same florid style, with painted ceilings, decorated frescoes, and much ornamental statuary. Sir Francis considered himself amply repaid for his expenditure on the classical ornamentation of Medmenham Abbey by the honour of having originated the idea.

A ruined tower was at that time added to the Abbey, as well as a cloister and other corresponding parts, and it was all built with so much taste and propriety that many people have been tempted to regard it as genuine ancient work. Sir Francis Dashwood also removed from the Abbey Church the figure of the Virgin seated on a throne, and holding the Infant Saviour in her arms, which he placed in a niche of the tower, and over the eastern porch of the house he painted the motto of the Club, copied from the famous inscription on Rabelais's Abbey of Thelema :

FAY CE QUE VOUDRAS

(*Do what you wish*).

Within the cloister was the chapter-room, where the members assembled on all solemn occasions. Here the Eleusinian mysteries of the pagan Franciscans were performed with great secrecy, and libations were poured forth in much pomp to the Bona Dea. The

chapter-room was fitted up with exquisite taste. At one end was a statue of Harpocrates, the Egyptian god of silence. At the other stood a figure of the goddess Angerona, a Roman divinity, who in the attitude of laying her finger on her lips enjoined men not to divulge secret and sacred things. Over the doorway opening from the corridor into the chapter-room these words were inscribed :

AUDE HOSPES CONTEMNERE OPES

(*O Guest, dare to set riches at naught*).

The glare of light inside the room was judiciously excluded by the pleasing gloom of ancient stained glass, in designs of coronets, roses, and portcullises.

The first members of the Club were men of every polite accomplishment, and every power of pleasing conversation. These things, with their rank and fortune, and above all the mystery of their institution, which set curiosity on fire, made admission into the Club an object of universal ambition. The principal members were twelve in number besides the chairman. To supply any decrease an inferior Order of as many more was also instituted. The probationary office of the latter was to attend upon their superiors in the celebration of their mysteries, when no ordinary servants were admitted.

The process of initiation took place in what remained of the old Abbey Church, the interior of which was restored and painted with licentious devices and emblems. Each member received a new name on admission to the community, by which he was thereafter identified. Paul Whitehead, Secretary and Steward to the Order, was known as Paul the Aged, and John Wilkes became John of Aylesbury. The ceremony of initiation was a blasphemy of the religious rites of the Monastic Orders, and particularly of the Franciscans. In his early youth Francis Dashwood

had been thoroughly disgusted at the superstitious monastic proceedings to which he had been constantly taken by a well-meaning but unwise tutor, and his youthful prejudice seems to have run riot in the ceremony of the Order which he founded.

Nothing was lacking which could satisfy the luxurious indulgence of the members. The cellars were stored with the choicest wines, and the larders with the delicacies of every climate. The expenses were defrayed jointly by the whole community, the superior contributing no more than any other member. The meetings were never protracted beyond a week at a time, nor held more than twice a year, so that by the very frugality of pleasure the gatherings were always returned to with the keenness of novelty.

On the more formal occasions members of the Club wore the conventual costume of the Order, which was of crimson and blue, with a silver badge, " Love and Friendship," in the mitre and on the gown.

In the grounds of the Abbey, which were beautifully laid out, was a small temple dedicated to Cloacina, with an inscription :

THIS CHAPEL OF EASE WAS FOUNDED IN THE YEAR 1760.

Within the Temple, and facing the entrance, was written this inscription :

AEQUE PAUPERIBUS PRODEST, LOCUPLETIBUS AEQUE ;
AEQUE NEGLECTUM PUERIS SENIBUS NOCEBIT

(*Alike it benefits the poor, alike the rich ;*
Alike, when slighted, it will harm youths and old men).

On a pedestal in another part of the garden was a whimsical representation of Trophonius's Cave, from which all creatures were said to come out melancholy.

A good deal of uncertainty has existed about the

date when the Medmenham Club was founded. Some writers have placed it as early as 1742, but no reason can be found to support the suggestion, except that about then Sir Francis Dashwood returned from Italy, and had his portrait painted for the Dilettanti Society as St. Francis of Wycombe. The correspondence of Edmund Duffield makes it clear that about 1750 he was living at Medmenham Abbey with his brothers. His writings of the next few years mention nothing of such a domestic upheaval as would have been caused by extensive building operations. It was not until after 1751, when he lost his political chief, Frederic, Prince of Wales, that Sir Francis Dashwood became more prominently associated with Buckinghamshire. All the evidence would rather agree that the Medmenham Club started on its career about 1755, and that within eight years it was wrecked on the rocks of political discord.

MEMBERS OF MEDMENHAM CLUB

There is no official record of the proceedings of the Club, and no account whatever of the rules of the society, but the principal members appear to have been:

Sir Francis Dashwood, Bart., afterwards Lord le Despencer, President.
Sir John Dashwood King, Bart., half-brother to Sir Francis Dashwood, of West Wycombe.
Dr. Benjamin Bates, scholar and wit, of Aylesbury.
Charles Churchill, poet, of Westminster.
Henry Lovibond Collins, poet, whose antecedents are unknown.
The Hon. George Dodington, afterwards Lord Melcombe Regis, patron of art and literature.
Francis Duffield, artist, of Medmenham.
Robert Lloyd, scholar and poet, of Westminster.
John Montagu, fourth Earl of Sandwich.

Thomas Potter, politician and wit, son of a learned Archbishop of Canterbury.

Sir William Stanhope, K.B., son of the Earl of Chesterfield.

Paul Whitehead, satirist and politician, of Twickenham.

John Wilkes, journalist, and M.P. for Aylesbury.

The following biographical notes on certain of the outstanding members give a fair illustration of the kind of atmosphere which must have prevailed in the Club, and they also indicate the conflicting political elements which subsequently brought the society to ruin:

Sir Francis Dashwood, Bart., afterwards Baron le Despencer, was the grandson on his father's side of a Turkey merchant and alderman of London, on his mother's side of the 4th Earl of Westmorland. His mother died when he was two years old; the estates and baronetcy of his father, Sir Francis Dashwood, Bart., came to him at the age of sixteen. He was educated by an unwise tutor, who worked upon a "frank, spirited, and sensible (i.e. sensitive) temperament" driving it from extremes of superstitious fear to a bold reaction against all religion and morality. Sir Francis spent his early years abroad; masquerading as Charles XII to captivate the Czarina; and fleeing the Papal dominions to escape the results of a frolic, in which he horse-whipped the penitents taking part in the Good Friday service at the Sistine Chapel. On his return from Italy he founded the Dilettanti Society for Young Travellers with a taste for arts and antiquity, and attached himself to the Court of Frederic Louis, Prince of Wales, "the greatest ass and the greatest liar in the whole world," beginning his political career as one of the Prince's Parliamentary supporters against Walpole.

When he presided over the Medmenham Club he was about fifty years of age, and having lost his political leader, the Prince of Wales, he was strengthening his more local connections with Buckinghamshire. In 1745 he married a Buckinghamshire bride, Sarah Gould of Iver, "a poor forlorn Presbyterian prude." He rebuilt his father's seat at West Wycombe and the Church there with a profusion of ornament "in the Grecian gusto." In 1757 he became first Colonel of the Buckinghamshire Militia, raised on the outbreak of the Seven Years' War, with John

Wilkes as his Lieutenant-Colonel. From June 1762 to April 1763 he held ingloriously the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer, without possessing the least rudiment of financial knowledge.

In 1763 the abeyance of the Barony of le Despencer was terminated in favour of Sir Francis Dashwood, and he afterwards retired into " comparative respectability and insignificance."

Sir John Dashwood King was the son of Sir Francis Dashwood by his third wife Mary, a daughter of Major King and niece to Dr. King, Master of the Charter House, London. John was thus the half-brother to Sir Francis Dashwood, founder of the Medmenham Club. He was born 4th August 1716 and was lord of the manors of West Wycombe and Halton, Co. Bucks. He studied law, entering Lincoln's Inn in 1732 and graduating as B.C.L. at Cambridge in 1744. In 1742 he had taken his mother's surname of King by Act of Parliament. About the time when the Club flourished he was Member of Parliament for Bishop's Castle (1753–1761). By the will of Francis Duffield, owner of the Abbey, dated 2nd February 1757 and proved 14th June 1758, he was appointed trustee of the Abbey estates on behalf of the illegitimate infant children to whom the property then passed.

In 1761 John Dashwood King married Sarah, daughter of Edmund Moore, of Sayes House, Chertsey, a descendant of Anne Agar, sister to John Milton. He succeeded his half-brother as baronet in December 1781, and died in December 1793 at the age of 78.

Benjamin Bates, M.D., of Edinburgh, settled at Aylesbury as a physician about 1758. " His polished manners and agreeable vivacity contributed with his scientific attainments to render him a general favourite amongst all classes." He left his practice at Aylesbury in 1781 to attend Lord le Despencer, who was about to travel on the Continent for his health. He was the last survivor of the Medmenham Club. " The Doctor repeatedly declared that excepting the excesses to which the convivialities of the table may be supposed to have sometimes elevated . . . its principal members, that association was unjustly stigmatised by some of the scandalous and sarcastic publications of its contemporaries ; this testimony is the more valuable as delivered by a gentleman of unimpeachable honour and veracity as Dr. Bates was. He died at Little Missenden in 1828, aged 98."—R. Gibbs, *Worthies of Buckinghamshire*.

Charles Churchill, satirist, born in 1731, was the son of a curate of St. John's, Westminster. He was educated at Westminster School with Robert Lloyd. At the age of seventeen he made a Fleet marriage, of which he afterwards grew tired. In 1756 he was ordained priest "through need, not choice," and succeeded to his father's curacy at Westminster, living a decent decorous life until 1761. He then separated from his wife, "shook off the old rusty gown," feeling himself "better qualified to be a gentleman than a poor curate," and disgusted at the preferment of men who "preached three times a year, and never performed the duties of their function," whilst he lived precariously on the "stipend of a journeyman tailor." Indeed, only the intervention of Robert Lloyd's father saved him from a debtor's prison.

Charles Churchill next took up literature as a livelihood, and in March 1761 he became famous through the publication of "The Rosciad," a satire on actors after the style of Pope's "Dunciad." Thus he became intimate with the fashionable world, frequented coffee-houses and taverns, and formed with John Wilkes a close friendship based upon common interests in literature and politics as well as immorality, as their correspondence shows. It was through this intimacy with John Wilkes that he was introduced to the Medmenham Club, and it was because of this friendship that he ridiculed Sir Francis Dashwood, the Earl of Sandwich, and Paul Whitehead in his satires, "The Duellist" and "The Candidate." His saving virtues were his loyalty to John Wilkes and Robert Lloyd, and his warm-hearted generosity. He died in 1764 whilst visiting Wilkes in France.

The Hon. George Bubb Dodington, Baron Melcombe Regis, politician and place-hunter, was born in 1691, and was thus a senior member of the Club. His political career, chiefly noteworthy for unprincipled changes, began in 1715, and in 1740 he joined the opposition then centred round Frederic, Prince of Wales. From his uncle he inherited a large estate in 1720, and shortly afterwards married a Mrs. Behan; but until 1742 did not acknowledge the marriage. Like many other weak-minded tuft-hunters he indulged in political intrigues, and patronised men of letters. George Dodington built a palatial country mansion, designed by Vanburgh, and filled his villa at Hammersmith and his town house in Pall Mall with gorgeous and tasteless splendour, even decorating his bed with gold and silver embroidery from old coats and breeches. Sir Francis Dashwood supported George Dodington's return to the Prince's court in 1749, to the astonishment of Walpole, who failed to

understand how Dodington could still find a dupe. The two were zealous in pleading for mercy for Lord Byng in 1757, and in 1761, when Sir Francis Dashwood joined Lord Bute's ministry, George Dodington received a peerage. In the following year he died.

Robert Lloyd was born in 1733, and had just graduated B.A. in 1755. He was the son of the second master of Westminster School, and had himself been educated there with Charles Churchill, the poet Cowper, and Warren Hastings. He was an amiable, accomplished poet, "contented to scamper round the foot of Parnassus on his little Welsh pony, which seems never to have tired" (Wilkes). His character was at once ennobled by the loyalty of his friendship with Charles Churchill and John Wilkes, and degraded by the excesses, chiefly of intemperance, to which that friendship brought him. One of the ablest classical scholars among the members of the Medmenham Club, he was yet in constant opposition to the classical mannerisms of his time, inveighing against those

> "Who read your authors Greek and Latin
> And bring you strange quotations pat in."
>
> *The Poet.*

He turned from the uncongenial and ill-paid task of teaching in Westminster School to find still worse remuneration for his poetry. Finally he was landed in the Fleet Prison for debt, living there on an allowance from his friend Charles Churchill, and deserted by all his acquaintances save Churchill and Wilkes. When he heard the news of Churchill's death in 1764, Robert Lloyd pushed away the plate of dinner which had just been brought to him, and saying "I shall follow poor Charles," took to his bed, and died soon after.

John Montagu, fourth Earl of Sandwich, born in 1718, was the grandson of the third earl, and succeeded to the peerage when eleven years old. "From his youth," according to the Earl of Chesterfield, "he proceeded in one uniform unblushing course of debauchery and dissipation." Having spent two years in Continental travel, he began his political career in 1774 as a supporter of the Duke of Bedford, and from 1755 until 1763 he was one of the joint Vice-Treasurers of Ireland. As one of the principal Secretaries of State he took an active part in the attack on John Wilkes and the issue of the General Warrant against him for the publication of the *North Briton*, No. 45, also for producing the "Essay on Woman"; and in collecting

the proofs against Wilkes for party purposes he was aided by Sir Francis Dashwood (*Egerton MS.* 2136, fo. 85). He thus drew upon himself popular disfavour, and was dubbed " Jemmy Twitcher," after the betrayer of Captain Macheath in the " Beggar's Opera." His later life was chiefly noteworthy for his maladministration of the Admiralty during the wars with America and France.

Thomas Potter, politician and wit, born in 1718, was the son of John Potter, the learned Archbishop of Canterbury. On the paternal side his grandfather was a Yorkshire linendraper. At the death of the Archbishop in 1747 Thomas Potter inherited a large fortune, from which his elder brother had been excluded by an imprudent marriage, while he himself had lost the wife he had married at his father's dictation. When he came into his fortune Thomas Potter already held several lucrative legal posts, obtained through paternal influence. He then married an Oxfordshire heiress, and began his political career as M.P. for a Cornish borough. From 1748 Thomas Potter served as secretary to Frederic, Prince of Wales. An ambitious and able man, he was an eloquent speaker and a good writer ; but his ready and lively wit was marred by a coarseness conspicuous even in his own age, so that Charles Churchill was moved to say that (Warburton)

" With such emphasis and grace
Blasphemed, that Potter kept not his pace."

It was to the contaminating influence of Thomas Potter that Wilkes's biographer attributed his moral downfall.

Thomas Potter spoke with such success against a bill for removing the assizes from Aylesbury to Buckingham that the electors of Aylesbury returned him for the Parliament of 1754. He was re-elected there in 1756, when William Pitt appointed him Paymaster-General of the Land Forces. By arrangement with Pitt he manœuvered to represent Okehampton in 1757, leaving Aylesbury free for John Wilkes. The death of Thomas Potter in June 1759 after a long decline deprived Medmenham Club of one of its wittiest members, and his authorship of the " Essay on Woman " added irony to the attack subsequently made by his intimate friends, Earl Sandwich and Sir Francis Dashwood, upon John Wilkes for printing such an obscene poem.

Sir William Stanhope, K.B., second son of the Earl of Chesterfield, born 1702, was installed Knight of the Bath when George I revived the order in 1725. He lived at Eythorpe in the parish of Waddesdon, Bucks, and spent large sums in decorating

MEDMENHAM ABBEY

(*Part of the frontage to the Thames*)

THE former Abbey Church covered the lawn in the foreground, and extended westward towards the Ferry. All traces of the old church, except the foundations underground, have now disappeared. The cloisters and ruined tower in the picture were added by Sir Francis Dashwood (1755), when the building became the home of Medmenham Club.

To face p. 225.

Eythorpe House and grounds. Sir William was Knight of the Shire for Buckinghamshire and held several public offices. He died in 1772.

Paul Whitehead, satirist and politician, was born in 1710. He was the son of a Holborn tailor, and was educated privately by a " learned and worthy " clergyman at Hitchin. Being apprenticed, together with the actor Lowth, to a city mercer, he became intimate with the theatrical world, and stood security for Charles Fleetwood, the manager, in a bond which the latter failed to meet. Having then left trade to study law, Paul Whitehead thus found himself in a debtor's prison, whence he published political squibs. In 1735 he married an amiable but idiotic heiress, whom he treated affectionately. Under the patronage of Bubb Dodington, Paul Whitehead became one of the " Prince's friends," and wrote songs and paragraphs for his political leaders, posing as a " patriot " and denouncing kings. He thus grew friendly with Sir Francis Dashwood. His published works end with an " Epistle to Dr. Thompson," issued in 1755. About that time Paul Whitehead became secretary to the Medmenham Club. In one poetic epistle he addressed the members as " Paul to the Mednamites " and refers to " Thomas (? Potter) and Francis " (Dashwood) and " Aylesbury John " (Wilkes). He gained the opprobrium of Charles Churchill and John Wilkes by accepting a patent place of £800 a year from Sir Francis Dashwood, when the latter was Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1762, which emolument he retained until his death in 1774, when he bequeathed his heart to Despencer, to bury at West Wycombe. This was done with great ceremony in August 1775. The procession of Buckinghamshire Militia, with a choir, fifes, horns, and a crape-covered drum, conducted the heart in a marble urn to a mausoleum in West Wycombe Park, and a specially composed oratorio was afterwards performed in West Wycombe Church.

John Wilkes, the son of a Clerkenwell distiller and educated for the law, chiefly by his own efforts at Aylesbury and in the University of Leyden, returned to England in 1749, and married an Aylesbury bride of good fortune much his senior. He soon became discontented with her humdrum home in Red Lion Court, and set up for himself at Westminster a fashionable abode, where he entertained " juvenile, gay bacchanalians of dissolute manners and vulgar language " (*Almon. Corr. of John Wilkes*, 1, 18). These included Thomas Potter, then M.P. for Aylesbury, Lord Sandwich, and Sir Francis Dashwood, for

they had in common a love of art and classics, whilst John Wilkes's constant wit and humour made him an excellent companion.

His connection with Buckinghamshire was strengthened about the time of the formation of Medmenham Club. In 1754 he was High Sheriff of the County ; in 1757 he succeeded Thomas Potter as M.P. for Aylesbury at a cost of £7000 which even in those corrupt days seemed to him more than it was worth. During the next few years he lived in vain hopes of preferment to the Government of Canada, or an Embassy to Constantinople.

He made firm friendship with the literary members of the Medmenham Club, Lloyd, Churchill, and Whitehead, but his practical jokes alienated the more aristocratic members, and his political activities soon widened the breach.

He began his attacks on the Government of which Sir Francis Dashwood was a minister in 1762, establishing in conjunction with Charles Churchill the *North Briton*, also a satire on Lord Bute, and attacking Dashwood's ill-fated cider tax. Whilst the liberty of the subject and of the press was being vindicated in the famous case of the *North Briton* No. 45, Earl Sandwich charged Wilkes with the issue of the " Essay on Woman," an obscure and impious libel, apparently composed by Thomas Potter. The harmony of the Club was thus broken, even before Wilkes reached the time of his greatest popularity.

The Club came to an abrupt end about five years after the decease of Francis Duffield V, who was one of the foundation members. The failure of Sir Francis Dashwood as Chancellor of the Exchequer, the bitter attacks of John Wilkes on the Government of the day, and the treacherous prosecution of the latter for " false, scandalous, and seditious libel," effectively scattered the members into rival political camps. " Politics no sooner infused themselves amongst these rosy anchorites," according to Horace Walpole, " than dissensions were kindled, and a false brother arose, who divulged the arcana, and exposed the good Prior, in order to ridicule him as Minister of the Finances." The old friendships of the Club were rudely severed through the charges manipulated by the Earl of Sandwich and Sir Francis Dashwood against John

Wilkes, in connection with the "Essay on Woman," and before the conclusion of 1763 Medmenham Club had passed out of existence.

It is said that by way of atonement for his excesses Sir Francis Dashwood restored and extended West Wycombe Church, a work completed in 1763. In the churchyard there he placed a sundial, with this inscription :

KEEP THY TONGUE FROM EVIL SPEAKING,
LYING, AND SLANDERING.

The words are not unlike a rebuke to his enemies, who grossly exaggerated the dissipations of Medmenham Club, giving prominence to tales of devil-worship, of the apparition of a baboon hideously attired, and of the habit of sleeping in cradles, such as were commonly reported in the satires published by the journals of that day.

FRANCIS DUFFIELD VI, 1758

After the Abbey was leased to Medmenham Club the Duffield household removed to the present "Manor House," then known as the White House, which for generations had been the family dower residence. Much of the correspondence of Edmund Duffield has been discovered there, and it was at this house that Francis Duffield V died, 29th May 1758. The latter followed the example of his father in that he never married, but by one Elizabeth Robins, of Medmenham, there were born to him two children, Francis VI and Knightly. The elder child grew up to inherit a ruined estate, and the younger son was drowned at sea. The lands, tenements, hereditaments, and real estate of Francis V by his will were placed in charge of John Dashwood King and John Norris, to be administered until Francis VI came of age, subject to three annuities of £40 each, payable to his brother James, his younger

son Knightly, and to Elizabeth Robins. The trustees were each to receive £50 for their trouble.

On the death of his father in 1758 Francis VI was just over eight years of age. The annuities charged upon the estate, as well as the maintenance and education of the young heir, proved a heavy burden on an impoverished patrimony. Through the twelve years of minority the trustees were unable to accumulate surplus profits, and Francis had inherited expensive tastes. At an early stage he resorted to the Jews. When Francis VI was twenty-three years of age he was heavily in debt, and among other obligations owed £5000 to Jeremiah Crutchley, a Bond Street money-lender.

In the year 1777 Francis Duffield conveyed part of the Abbey estate to John Morton of Danesfield, who stood surety for him for £1000 due the following July. Practically every available asset had by that time been mortgaged. During the next year Francis bargained and sold to John Morton all his belongings in Medmenham, Marlow, and Hambleden, or elsewhere, to sell for the benefit of his creditors. The conditions of sale provided that John Morton discharged all outstanding obligations, paying any residuary money to Francis Duffield or his nominees. John Morton himself bought up Medmenham Abbey, and in 1780 he died, bequeathing the same with other property to his widow. Seven years later she parted with the entire Buckinghamshire estate to Robert Scott, of Wimpole Street in the parish of St. Marylebone, and for more than a century Medmenham Abbey remained in possession of the heirs of Robert Scott.

Francis Duffield VI followed the military tradition of his family, and about the time he disposed of his property he received a commission as Captain in the 60th, or Royal American, Regiment of Foot. He became the second husband of Lady Elizabeth

Birmingham, only daughter of Thomas, Earl of Louth. Her previous marriage with Thomas Baily Heath Sewell was dissolved by Act of Parliament in 1779, and on 19th July that year she married Francis Duffield. In the marriage settlement he described himself as of Medmenham Abbey, Co. Bucks, but he had parted with his title to the property some time previously, and he does not seem to have had any subsequent association with his old home.

The Abbey towards the close of that century was tenanted by a poor family who augmented their living by conducting curious visitors over the deserted haunts of piety, romance, and revelry. The Club room within the cloister was fitted up for the accommodation of pleasure parties, and the relics of occupation left by former tenants provided convenient material to weave an interesting story. An enormous cradle was exhibited to support the reputed sleeping habits of the monks of St. Francis ; a chair said to have once belonged to the abbots of Medmenham was acquired by Mr. Disraeli, and is still shown at Hughenden Manor ; while countless people came to gaze in awe at the chimney down which the Devil descended to join his disciples in a midnight carouse. The association of Medmenham Abbey for eight years with a Hell Fire Club seemed to have attracted more distinction to the place than the fact that for more than three centuries it was the nursery of piety and the home of enlightenment.

THE FERRY BOAT INN

Near the Abbey stood an old tenement or wharf-house, where lived the ferry-keeper. The house had been there for generations. In the eighteenth century for more than thirty years it was occupied by John and Sarah Gun. Its special interest to posterity is that the wharf-house was probably the old abbey guest-house,

which afterwards became a licensed inn, and was known to pleasure-seekers as the Ferry Boat Inn. About the middle of the nineteenth century the inn was one of the best known on the Thames. It was held for some years by John Johnson, who also rented from Charles Robert Scott-Murray the osier-beds in the river. The cultivation of osiers for basket-making was an industry in many riverside places, but except for the occasional handy-man of the village, able to do any kind of work, the making of baskets was mostly carried on in the towns. Some riverside places still preserve the industry, but in an age of specialists it has gone the way of most manufactures which had their first homes in the smaller centres of population. The memory of John Johnson has not yet completely faded ; the elder people still speak of him as one of the outstanding men in the village of his day. He lies buried beneath the great yew at the south-east corner of the churchyard, where a stone slab records that he died 11th April 1849.

After his decease the Ferry Boat Inn with its appurtenances was rented to Mrs. Bitmead, whose name is familiar in Medmenham. Her frequent guests were painters attracted by the charm of the surrounding country. In those golden days of river life the ruins of Medmenham Abbey, which had been divided into tenements for labourers, were the favourite theme of the artist. The lichens had given to the stone-work the rich clothing of grey and gold which the painter ever loves, while here and there time had added a green drapery of ivy. One of the artists, who afterwards became famous, painted a signboard which hung over the inn door, and it was considered of such excellent merit that it might have graced the Royal Academy.

The stream of prosperity proved so profitable that Mrs. Bitmead launched out on more ambitious lines. The picturesque ferry-house still remained, but its

beauty was marred by a new wing with an imposing red-brick frontage, in the utilitarian style of the period. It was renamed the Ferry Hotel. Mrs. Bitmead was succeeded by Thomas Street, who gave place to Henry John Todd, and he in turn was followed by Frederick Johnson, the last of the line of hotel-keepers. During the latter part of the century Medmenham Abbey was leased to the keepers of the hotel, who used it as a guest-house for visitors, because the stream of river-side patrons generally overflowed during the summer months. In the upper rooms of the Abbey the hotel servants were lodged.

These conditions continued until 1895, when Mr. Robert Hudson bought part of the Medmenham estate of Charles Aloysius Scott-Murray, and proceeded to reconstruct the ruins of the Abbey. Soon after this event the river traffic, once so rich in its prospects, dwindled almost to nothing. A generation of hustlers arose which loved motors more than the peace of a sleepy village. The career of the Ferry Hotel was rounded off in 1913 by the failure of the hotel-keeper, when the building again became an annexe of Medmenham Abbey.

THE RESTORATION OF MEDMENHAM ABBEY, 1895

The restoration of Medmenham Abbey was entrusted by Mr. Robert Hudson to Mr. F. H. Romaine Walker, F.R.I.B.A., who converted the ramshackle dwelling into a charming country residence. In this process great care was observed to preserve the ancient and historical character of the building. Much of the original Tudor house may still be seen on the eastern front, where the outline and main features of the Duffield mansion remained undisturbed. Many pieces of old wrought chalk were unearthed and incorporated in the restoration, and anything which was new was faithfully reproduced to match the old.

One of the striking features observed by the architect was the remarkable way in which the old chalk had withstood the ravages of time.

The main range of buildings on the east and south with a wall on the west encloses a square courtyard. Around the sides of this courtyard were formerly the Abbey cloisters. On the north side it is entered through an archway. In line with this archway and parallel with the drive runs a flint rubble wall over a yard thick, breaking off towards the east with a ragged end. This wall without doubt is part of the original Abbey. In it are traces of a flint arch with a Norman head, semicircular in shape and built of chalk. The low crown of the arch and the level of the surrounding ground make it clear that the buried ruins of once extensive buildings have raised the surface by an appreciable amount. Wherever the lawns have been disturbed buried masonry has been unearthed in every direction, although nothing of particular value has ever been discovered.

On the river front another flint rubble wall connecting the main range of buildings with an annexe is also ancient to some extent. This wall was formerly part of the Abbey Church, and it is the only surviving portion of the edifice preserved by the Duffields as a domestic chapel. The arches on the south-east river front, added by the Medmenham Club, were rebuilt by Mr. Romaine Walker, who copied for that purpose the mouldings of an original column of the Abbey church, but otherwise these ruins were not disturbed.

When the rebuilding of Danesfield was completed, Mr. Robert Hudson entered into possession of the new house, and in September 1901 leased the Abbey to Mrs. Herbert Oakley and her two brothers, Captain Tyrell Pirie, of the Gordon Highlanders, and Major Arthur Pirie, 21st Lancers. Two years later Mrs.

Oakley married Colonel Douglas Dawson, C.M.G., afterwards created G.C.V.O., C.B., and knighted. In the year 1911 Mr. Hudson disposed of the whole Danesfield property, including the Abbey, to an estate agent, who within a few weeks sold Medmenham Abbey to Sir Douglas Dawson. This purchase included the Abbey demesne and two fields west of Ferry Lane, with the meadow and spinney on the Berkshire bank of the river.

Sir Douglas Dawson made many improvements in the gardens, and added a new wing to the house, south of the courtyard. The traces of his occupation now appear principally in the following emblazonment carved into the chalk face on the west front of the Abbey :

> *Arms.*—Quarterly 1st and 4th azure on a bend engrailed or three martlets gules : 2nd and 3rd azure three torches erect two and one inflamed gules.
> *Crest.*—An estoile of six points or.
> *Supporters.*—On the dexter side an Irish Wolf Dog : and on the sinister side an Elk : both proper plain collared and chained or : and each charged on the shoulder with a crescent or.
> *Motto.*—" Toujours propice."

MORE RECENT CHANGES

For ten years Medmenham Abbey remained in possession of Sir Douglas Dawson, then he disposed of the property to Mr. Arthur Bendir, afterwards also of Grosvenor Square, London, the present owner, who has done much to beautify the house and its surroundings, by extending the ornamental grounds, and completing the work begun by his predecessors.

On the west side of the Abbey, where formerly the Ferry Hotel presented a very unsightly façade to the river, the modern building has been demolished, but the old inn has been preserved. The latter is now incorporated with a new annexe built of stone harmonising with the older part of the structure. The

stone-work of a fifteenth-century door and window from ancient buildings at Evreux has been adapted and used in the elevation facing the river. The new portion of this building generally is of the early thirteenth-century period, the date of the original Abbey of Medmenham. It is faced principally with chalk from local quarries, and care has been exercised to keep the new work in character with the existing work.

The interior of the Abbey has been largely remodelled by the present owner. He has introduced original fifteenth-century oak panelling into the drawing-room and other principal parts of the house. In every direction artistic skill, with infinite labour, has remarkably succeeded in developing and setting off to the best advantage the Early English and Tudor features possessed by a building of unique historical interest.

At the approach from Marlow Road a new lodge has been erected in keeping with the rest of things, giving the entrance a distinction it never hitherto possessed. The cottages on the estate have been repaired and their surroundings vastly improved. New farm buildings have been erected on the west of Ferry Lane. The ornamental gardens have been considerably extended, and even the most remote corners have learned to blossom as the rose. There are few places where nature and art have been so happily blended as in Medmenham Abbey, to create a country retreat of uncommon beauty and singular charm.

A great measure of its charm lies in its remarkable history. A house once consecrated to the spiritual development of the race, and for generations hallowed with intimate domestic memories, also sometime dedicated to the worship of strange gods, can never lose its old associations. They cling to the place, and give it a distinction all its own. No modern building

can ever possess such wealth of character. It has been the cradle of religion, the home of romance, and the altar of folly. In the garden fancy can still hear the music of the Midnight Mass floating across the lawn on the breeze. The present dining-room stands where was once the north transept of the Abbey church. The west end of the chapter-house may still be seen in the hall. Part of the old monks' parlour is now a library. Everywhere the pleasing gloom of the house suggests bygone pageantry. Imagination can see Mistress Alice Duffield fluttering downstairs in her "best damaske gown and damaske petticoate which is redd." In the dusk of the drawing-room the outlines of courtly revellers shape themselves in the shadows cast by the fire. But the shrines of Harpocrates and of Angerona have vanished, the pagan temple of Cloacina has perished, and the monks of St. Bernard sleep peacefully in their graves.

THE ANNALS OF MEDMENHAM ABBEY.

A.D.	
1160.	First foundation of Medmenham Abbey.
1165.	Death of Hugh de Bolebec II, founder, and monk of Medmenham.
1176.	Monks of Medmenham driven out by Reginald de Courtenay.
1201.	Confirmation by King John of foundation charter of Hugh de Bolebec.
1204.	Second settlement of Medmenham Abbey. (Monks recalled the same year.)
1212.	Third settlement of Medmenham Abbey.
1232 *et seq.*	Permanent abbey church and monastic buildings erected.
1241.	Foundation endowment decided by agreement between the Abbot of Woburn and Isabel de Bolebec II.

1312. Abbot of Medmenham arraigned for plundering the manor of Dungate.

1525. Commission from Cardinal Wolsey to survey Medmenham Abbey, intending to bestow its revenues on Christ Church, Oxford.

1535. General visitation and valuation of all religious houses and churches.

1536. Dissolution of Medmenham Abbey, with a life pension to the retiring Abbot.

1537. Part of the endowment including the building granted to King Henry's new monastery of the Holy Trinity, Bisham.

1538. The above endowment surrendered to the Crown and leased to Thomas and Robert More.

1546. Medmenham Abbey and estate sold by the Crown to the above lessors.

1559. James and Frances Duffield purchased Medmenham Abbey and estate.

1590. Ruins of Medmenham Abbey converted into a private house.

1755. The Abbey was leased to Medmenham Club, when a ruined tower was added south-east of Elizabethan house, also a cloister with arches.

1778. Francis Duffield conveyed Medmenham Abbey estate to Dr. John Morton.

1787. Mrs. Morton sold the same estate with other property in Medmenham to Robert Scott.

1895. Charles Aloysius Scott-Murray disposed of the manor to Mr. Robert William Hudson, who restored Medmenham Abbey, and in 1901 leased it to Mrs. Oakley.

1911. Sir Douglas Dawson, who had married Mrs. Oakley, purchased Medmenham Abbey estate.

1921. Mr. Arthur Bendir acquired the above property from Sir Douglas Dawson.

CHAPTER VIII

THE PARISH CHURCH

" Some village Hampden, that, with dauntless breast,
The little tyrant of his fields withstood,
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood."

Elegy written in a Country Churchyard

THOMAS GRAY (1716–71)

CHAPTER VIII

THE PARISH CHURCH

HE ecclesiastical buildings of a country are a fair criterion of its spiritual condition. Where religion has been narrow and selfish, churches are mean, ill-cared-for, and uniform. The church at Medmenham, dedicated to St. Peter and St. Paul, is a monument of artistic thought. Much of its former glory has passed away, but sufficient still remains to connect the outstanding features with certain periods which have stamped their characteristic genius on a real storehouse of religious history. The type of architecture in a particular age was not confined to churches. It was the style in which men built their homes. It was the national manner of the period. The distinctive features in any church of door openings, windows, and arches are sufficient to reconstruct a good deal of its past history.

SAXON CHURCH

The village church of Saxon days possessed little of the dignity of later periods. It was just a stout beech-timbered and rough-cast edifice, unambitious in design, unpretentious in equipment, without a tower or chancel, possessing no seats or pulpit, and having the floor all on one level. The first church at Medmenham very possibly appeared during the ministry of Birinus, the Apostle of Wessex, and we may reasonably conclude that for nearly twelve centuries the site of the present building has been the consecrated centre of village life. In much the same place as now the church would thus have stood when the Norman Duke took possession of the land.

NORMAN FABRIC

The Norman Conquest brought to England a new governing race, a people different in character, conditions, training, and ideals from the English earls and thegns whom they supplanted ; and with the Normans came the passion for building. The Anglo-Norman period (1050–1170) marked the close of the Romanesque age in architecture. The main features of the style were solid rude masonry, narrow windows, round arches, and heavy mouldings. The Normans had a real desire to do something great for the glory of God, so it happened as time went on there was hardly a parish church in England which had not been rebuilt on a larger scale in the new style.

The main part of the present church at Medmenham was built in Norman days, during the reign of Henry II (1154–89), and in course of the first of the great religious movements which England was to experience afterwards in the preaching of the Friars, the Lollardism of Wyclif, the Reformation, the Puritan revival, and the missionary work of the Wesleys. It seems evident this church was erected by Hugh de Bolebec II, at that time lord of the manor, who also founded the Abbey of Medmenham.

The Norman church in Medmenham consisted of just a nave and tower, without any choir or transept. The north and south walls of the nave still remain, built of flint rubble mixed with blocks of chalk. The altar of the old church stood against the east wall, near the chancel step of the present building. In the south wall to the right of where that altar stood is still a piscina, with a pointed head and a square bowl, into which was emptied the water used in washing the sacred vessels. This piscina was blocked up when, after the building of the chancel, it had fallen into disuse, but it was opened again in 1844 during the renovation then in progress.

MEDMENHAM CHURCH

" I like that ancient Saxon phrase, which calls
The burial-ground God's Acre ! It is just ;
It consecrates each grave within its walls,
And breathes a benison o'er the sleeping dust."

God's Acre

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW (1807–82)

To face p. 240.

further eastward, into which the north chancel door would have opened, but the work was never carried out.

The Norman windows were few, small, and narrow. They would have been just single lights, each with a semicircular head and without any kind of glazing. The church of that period must have been very dark, for the window openings north and south of the nave were no more than six in number. The nave of the Norman church was low, covered with a flat wooden roof; but timbers decay, and damp causes beams to rot. The present roof belongs to the fifteenth century, when considerable alterations were made to the older structure, and new portions added.

There were no pews in those days; but running along the walls of the nave were stone seats, providing for the needs of the tired, the aged, and the infirm, a custom which originated the saying: "The weakest goes to the wall." These plinth seats still remain in many ancient churches; in other places they have been cut away to make room for more modern accommodation. The floor of the church was strewed with rushes cut from the river, according to the general custom of the age, and the congregation would stand or kneel. The aisle of the twentieth century is still covered with rushes, but the rushes are now woven into matting. No benches or carved woodwork relieved the sombre severity of ancient days. In winter terribly cold, even in summer terribly dark, the house of God was yet far more magnificent than any house of man in the remote country, and could not fail to affect the worshipper with a sense of deep solemnity.

THE CHANTRY CHAPEL

In the north wall of the nave is an archway originally opening into a transept or chapel. The arch is

of chalk, chamfered, with plain faces, and it belongs to the Decorated Period (1300–1400). One of the distinguishing features of that style appears in the arch being less pointed than the Early English. The original transept belonged to the time when many enlargements of churches were being made to provide room for chantry chapels. Against the east wall of the chapel was placed an altar, raised on a few steps, where Masses were said for the repose of the souls of the founder, his wife, parents, benefactors, and the King, as well as " for all Christian souls." The idea arose out of a growing feeling that prayers were necessary for the welfare of the departed. The chantry chapel was in many cases built during the lifetime of the founder, but any endowment was generally a testamentary bequest. As it was necessary to alienate lands in mortmain to create an endowment in perpetuity, and the procedure was a costly one, many chantries were left to depend upon the voluntary offerings of posterity. It is evident that the chantry of Medmenham possessed no permanent endowment, because it is not enumerated among the Chantry Surveys of Henry VIII and Edward VI. Concerning the founder we have no certain knowledge, but it is quite possible, and indeed probable, that it was the work of the de la Lude family who during the fourteenth century held the Hall lands and lived at Wittington (*see* p. 63).

This transept was still standing in the eighteenth century, but was probably demolished about 1720, when the chancel was repaired. In a letter to Dr. Thomas Hearne, 16th September 1718, on the antiquities of Medmenham, the following passage occurs :

> You have heard of the Vault under the Chapell. They say it hath been opened, but nothing found. It hath been kept as a consecrated place till of late, but I fear it is now prophaned,

> for I have observed the door to stand open, as I have gone that way. . . . There is in the wall of the Chancell of the Church an old Tomb, which, they say, was Cardinal Pole's brother.
>
> Hearne's *Collections*, vol. vi., Oxford Historical Society, 1902.

When the transept disappeared, the arch in the north wall of the nave was blocked up with the masonry of the demolished building, some portions of which have been used again in the recent restoration. In the upper part of the archway a small window was inserted to give additional light. This window was filled up in 1837, when a mural tablet to Charles Scott Murray was placed there, which would have partly obscured the opening. The restorations of 1924, when the transept was rebuilt, have been executed in Beer stone, which has the appearance of chalk, but is sufficiently distinct in texture to differentiate new work from the original. In this rebuilding, the above window was inserted in the new masonry, and the memorial was placed in the chancel.

During the excavation for the new transept the limits of the old chapel could be plainly observed. For about 10 feet north of the nave wall the digging was through loose material, with a mixture of tiles, plaster, and other building rubbish, but beyond that distance came the firm soil. The church by this most recent addition has been restored to the approximate proportions it possessed when the Reformation first began to dawn in England.

PERPENDICULAR CHANCEL

The architecture of the chancel suggests it was erected during the early Perpendicular Period, at a time when, after the stress and sorrow following upon the Black Death, there was much building of parish churches, and many additions to those already built. It came on the crest of a religious revival started by the

work of Wyclif (*d.* 1384) and his contemporaries. The Perpendicular style of architecture is clearly indicated by its name, because the mullions of the windows and the tracery of the arches run in perpendicular lines. The walls and buttresses of the chancel are of rough chequer work. The east window of Medmenham Church is a fair example of early Perpendicular work. The windows north and south of the chancel are more reminiscent of the later Decorated Period, when geometrical tracery prevailed.

The buttresses of the east walls practically settle that the chancel was not part of an older structure into which later windows have been inserted. All buildings of earlier periods were strengthened at each corner by two buttresses, each at right angles to the wall it supported. In the Decorated Period the diagonal buttress, set at the corner of the walls, first appeared, a feature constructionally poorer and not so symmetrical as the older form, but distinctive of a period when builders were striving to reduce the bulk of their masonry. These features would suggest 1400–1450 as the approximate date of the chancel. The work was probably due to the benefactions of Geoffrey Pole, who established himself at Wittington in 1445, and subsequently became lord of the manor of Medmenham. The old chancel, which ran level with the nave, was paved with painted tiles designed in various figures, particularly quarterfoils, separated by crosses of yellow and red. These remained until 1844, when the floor was partially elevated and laid with encaustic tiles. At that time the chancel windows were rebuilt and restored, and two doorways were cut north and south of the chancel. The tomb of Arthur Pole, younger brother of Cardinal Pole, disappeared from the church in course of these alterations.

THE TOWER

The tower was rebuilt during the fifteenth century at the time the chancel was erected, and no doubt by the same benefactor. To connect the new tower with the existing work the nave was then opened westward by a lofty pointed archway cut into the wall of the Norman church. The mouldings around the tower arch are of the heavy order. The outer is a hollowed continuous chamfer on both sides starting from the base ; while the inner is a round roll moulding springing from the capitals of half-octagonal pilasters, the latter having also moulded bases.

The tower is built in three stages, starting at a lower level than the nave, with which it is connected by three steps. There are angle buttresses to the external walls. A projecting stair turret, containing thirty-seven steps, is carried up two stages on the south-east, and the top stage is finished with an embattled parapet. The lower part of the tower is now used as a vestry and ringing chamber. This portion is lit by a large window, identical in design with the east window, consisting of three trefoiled lights and tracery, with cavetto moulding and a pointed head, having an external moulded label. The second stage of the tower has a single trefoiled light in each wall. In the bell chamber is a louvred window of two trefoiled lights and tracery in each wall. The walls of the tower are covered with plaster and rough cast in patches. The tower has two doorways, each with a pointed head. The large west door has a continuous moulding of two hollow chamfers divided by a roll springing from the plinth, and it is finished with a moulded label. The door to the stair turret has chamfered jambs.

The original flat roof of the tower, once of cast lead, was an excellent example while it lasted of work in

the early fifteenth century. The tower was probably restored, the parapet rebuilt, and the lead roof renewed about 1706, a work traceable until recent years by the date cast into the old lead. In more recent years this roof has been recovered with milled lead, which has neither the soundness nor the durability of the older material.

NAVE WINDOWS

It is not without significance that as the centuries progressed there was a craving for more light, both in domestic and ecclesiastical buildings, which seems to have been partly due to the rediscovery of glass, and at the same time was the unconscious expression of man's spiritual longings. The pointed arches of earlier periods became flatter, and windows were made larger, as Perpendicular architecture developed, and were sharply rounded off where they spring from the upright sides; so that the internal opening thus became a four-centred arch, while the outside was finished with a square drip stone.

The narrow Norman windows of Medmenham Church were enlarged to the present proportions during that period, possibly about the year 1500, at which time Medmenham Manor was in possession of Sir Richard Pole. The nave windows are two-light openings, and five in number. One of them, at the south-east of the nave, was rebuilt in 1844, when the chancel was restored. The jambs and mullions of all these windows have a shallow cavetto moulding, and with a single exception on the tracery of the heads is all of one design. The north-west window of the nave was filled up with masonry about 1638, when a gallery was erected across the west end of the church. It remained in that condition for nearly 300 years, until in recent days the window was restored.

MEDIÆVAL GLASS

When considering the architectural merits of old churches, it should always be remembered that windows of the Perpendicular Period were never meant to be seen, as we so often see them, without their stained glass. The art of stained glass reached its height during the fifteenth century, just when the tower of Medmenham Church was completed; and the great west end with its

> Storied windows richly dight,
> Casting a dim religious light,

must have stood out in the evening sun very different from its present gaunt appearance. From the nave and chancel windows in past generations looked down in rich variety the saints England then adored, lighting up the message of the Gospel, and telling to the unlettered in striking form the story of redemptive love. The glow of pictured glass disappeared during the Puritan age, under the destructive bigotry of man, although one scrap still remains in the top of the west window. In the chancel some old painted glass survived until the eighteenth century, with these imperfect words written thereon:

Feme—et ora pro tuo famulo.

It is quite possible that this inscription was an exhortation to pray for certain of the Pole family buried in the chancel. When Lipscomb visited the church about 1840 there were in the nave windows fragments of coats of arms, also fragments of painted glass in the east window, but no perfect figures in that or any other window.

LATE PERPENDICULAR ROOF

The great glory of Perpendicular architecture was its wooden roofs, which then reached the most beautiful development. Another mark of the period is the

MEDMENHAM CHURCH

(*The interior looking eastward, as it appeared in July* 1924)

" God is more there than thou ; for thou art there
Only by his permission. Then beware,
And make thyself all reverence and fear.
Kneeling ne'er spoiled silk stocking : quit thy state,
All equal are within the Church's gate."

GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1632)

To face p. 248.

absence of a chancel arch, one of the most prominent features of earlier buildings. Towards the close of the fourteenth century there was a constant tendency to widen the chancel arch, with the result that in Perpendicular work it often disappeared altogether, the roof running through the church from west to east on the same level. In place of the chancel arch at Medmenham is a cambered tie-beam, with king-post, vertical struts, and curved braces, much restored, a work evidently of the late fifteenth century. This was the rood-beam on which in pre-Reformation days would have been seen figures of the crucified Saviour, and of the Virgin Mary, and St. John. The marks may still be observed where the cross was fastened to the king-post. A royal injunction of 1548, and a Parliamentary statute the following year, ordering the abolition of all images in places of worship, resulted in the removal from Medmenham Church of what were considered superstitious emblems.

The whole roof of the church appears to have been renewed in the late fifteenth century. The outside is covered with tiles and ridging, a slight break being noticeable between the nave and chancel where the two portions are joined together. The new roof was no doubt part of an extensive restoration and enlargement, which included rebuilding the tower, adding the chancel, and reconstructing the nave windows. The whole work was most probably undertaken by Sir Richard Pole, of Bockmer, the father of Reginald Pole, who became Archbishop of Canterbury, and Cardinal. The open timbered roof remained in its original beauty until 1702, when, during the incumbency of David Dicconson, the church was "seeled and adorned." In the year 1844 Mr. Townsend complained :

> The ceiling of the chancel was decorated with gaudy colours and golden stars, and all without the consent or knowledge of the freeholders of the Chancel.
>
> *Correspondence of Joseph Townsend*, 1845.

THE PORCH

The south porch as it exists to-day has no dignity or beauty. It probably belongs to the restorations of 1844–5. Until about 1890 there were porch gates to shut out sheep which might be turned in to graze in the churchyard. The former glory of porches has departed; they are now mere shelters from the rain. In mediæval times the first part of the marriage service took place in the porch; women were churched there; offenders were there put to public penance. The porches of those days were therefore roomy, yet no trace remains of Medmenham Church having ever possessed a more dignified approach than the present timber-and-tile excrescence.

THE FONT

The original Norman font of Medmenham Church was circular in shape, and of plain design, with a pyramidal carved cover made of oak. This font disappeared during the renovations of the nineteenth century, when so many ecclesiastical features were sacrificed to modern vandalism. The present font, octagonal in shape, and set on an octagonal base, was presented by Charles Robert Scott-Murray in 1845. Each side of the font has a sunk moulded face, and the lower cornice has at each angle the head of a cherub. The oak cover is of neat design with carved decoration recently restored.

REREDOS AND ALTAR

The article of ecclesiastical equipment which at different times has evoked the most heated controversy is without doubt the altar, or communion table. The construction of the altar, the position of the celebrant, and the attitude of the communicants, are

questions which have separated ecclesiastics into opposite camps. The communion table of Medmenham Church during the eighteenth century consisted of a large plain flat slab of curious brownish marble on a frame and legs of wood. In the year 1821, Richard Hunt being Vicar, a new table, entirely of wood, was obtained. This communion table was removed in 1843—

> to make room for Mr. Murray's stone Altar, with its letters of many colours. The stone Altar on Sacrament days, instead of being covered with a cloth of fair white linen, appeared bedecked and bedizened with crimson velvet, gold embroidery, lawn, and lace.
>
> *Correspondence of Joseph Townsend*, 1845.

In the same renovations of the church a stone reredos with pinnacles and crockets was built at the east end, and an aumbry was formed of similar decoration. These things took place just when Protestantism was coming into conflict with the Catholic Movement. Joseph Townsend of Wood End then took up the cudgels to remove—

> all such superstitious emblems, decorations, and erections,

on the ground that—

> his sense of duty to the Protestant Church of England compelled him to discountenance what he believed to be improper compliance of the Vicar of Medmenham with the hostile Church of Rome.
>
> *Correspondence of Joseph Townsend*, 1845.

There were stormy passages between Mr. Townsend, and the Vicar of Medmenham, the Churchwardens, and the Archdeacon of Buckinghamshire, ending in the stone altar being broken up by order of the Archdeacon, and the table of wood being restored. The reredos survived until 1906, and the aumbry still remains. The restored communion table was never a dignified structure, but it performed useful service

until recent years, when, in course of lining the chancel walls with oak, the old table was replaced by one of carved and panelled design.

THE PULPIT

There were no pulpits in country churches of long ago, probably because the preaching parson was a novelty unknown. Some who were vicars of Medmenham twenty or thirty years probably never once composed or preached a sermon. A preacher with any gift of oratory would have been regarded as a prophet sent by God. When the Church in England became established, the preaching of the Gospel died out. The result was that from six to seven hundred years ago we find the darkest period in English history. The people were uninstructed in the very rudiments of morality, therefore lawlessness, crime, and corruption were the common order of the day. The clergy of the Middle Ages were ordered to " openly in the church instruct " the children of the parish, and each child was expected before Confirmation to be able to repeat the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments ; but the very necessity for such an order frequently repeated proves how ignorant the great mass of people must have been of the very fundamentals. The Puritan revival brought the sermon into a new place of dignity. In their zeal for preaching, the morning sermon often lasted until well into the afternoon. No one can read the sermons of those days without marvelling at the courage and endurance of a congregation able to sit stolidly to the end.

The first pulpit in Medmenham Church seems to have appeared at that time, probably about the year 1608, when Robert Lewin first received a preacher's licence. It followed the usual three-decker form, comprehending in one structure a pulpit, reading-desk, and clerk's desk, being crowned in front with a crimson

cushion. Over the cushion hung an old pulpit cloth of crimson velvet, with the Borlase arms embroidered thereon. Thus the old three-decker stood for two centuries against the south wall of the nave, somewhere east of the south porch. In the year 1835 it was removed to the south-east corner of the nave, then again to the chancel. Four years later it disappeared into oblivion.

The three-decker was succeeded by a pulpit formed of ancient carved oak from the Continent, and a separate reading-desk, both placed within the rails of the chancel. At the same time the clerk's desk was put in the gallery. Within four years the pulpit was back in the old spot against the south wall of the nave, while " something had been substituted for a reading-desk." In the year 1845 the pulpit found a more permanent home at the north-east end of the nave. It incorporated some seventeenth-century panels, two with carvings of the Annunciation and Nativity, with elaborately mitred mouldings and cherubs' heads. Writing about these alterations, Joseph Townsend said:

> How soon this system of perpetual change will remove the Protestant congregation is a problem which time only can solve —there are many who disapprove of it whom circumstances compel to silence.
>
> *Correspondence of Joseph Townsend*, 1845.

The practice of preaching a sermon every Sunday followed upon the Evangelical revival of the eighteenth century. When Richard Hunt became infirm, Thomas Powys " was appointed curate, and was paid by Mrs. Scott, and he gave an additional sermon in the afternoon." The substitute for a reading-desk so scornfully despised by Joseph Townsend still survives, but the pulpit of curious device has been superseded by another more in harmony with its surroundings.

CHURCH PEWS

One striking thing in the growth of a church is to observe the changing effect of a prevailing idea. In an age of prayer and praise, when the Holy Communion was the principal service, people stood or knelt in their worship, and except for the weak and infirm seats were unknown. The first seats in Medmenham Church were just pens, of all shapes and sizes, in the nave and chancel. A visitation of 1637 is very eloquent on the subject (*see* p. 381). In the following year a gallery was erected across the west of the nave, where the quality might listen in comfort to the dreary, long-winded sermons. The early part of the nineteenth century saw the dawn of a more orderly system.

The present plan of allocating the sittings of Medmenham Church to certain houses arose from the fact that the payment of church-rates gave householders a proprietary right for suitable accommodation. No changes were made without the knowledge and consent of the Vestry, therefore the possession of a pew acquired almost the formality of a legal business. One illustration will serve for explaining the usual procedure. A whole page of the Churchwardens' Book is devoted to a Vestry Meeting on 4th July 1820, after due publication by the parish clerk in church, when the following allotment of pews was made :

> To Mr. Blackwell, the second pew.
> To the Vicar, the third pew.
> To Mr. John Sawyer, the fifth pew.
> All on the north side.
> To the joint use of Mr. James Sawyer, The Dog and Badger, and The Ferry, the first pew on the south side.
> The other pews were to be continued to the use and occupation of those persons to whom they belonged previously to this meeting.

During the following ten years the whole nave east of the south door was furnished with new seats, while

under the gallery movable benches were placed for the poorer people. This work was paid for by means of a church-rate. Ten years again elapsed, then we light upon days when pomp and circumstance began to drive out sweet simplicity :

> 1839. Mr. Scott Murray's pew was new lined with crimson, and the Vicar's new pew was lined with crimson, at their own cost. Mr. Townsend's new pew was new lined with purple, the colour of the Communion Table cover, at his own cost.
>
> *Correspondence of Joseph Townsend*, 1845.

The seating accommodation provided in 1830 still survives, with the exception that the loose benches formerly at the back of the church have been replaced with fixed pews. The junction of the new work with the old may still be seen where the north range of seats finishes with a moulded end, and there is no book-board in the usual place. When the choir stalls were added in 1906 the floor of the chancel was raised and covered with new tiles.

THE NAVE GALLERY

The Jacobean period, although in some respects a barren wilderness, was marked with a deep strain of sturdy piety, very real in its devotion and worship. During that time of transition, and in the year 1638, a gallery was built across the west end of Medmenham Church, William Short and Thomas Deane being then Churchwardens. The gallery was approached by a stair against the north wall of the nave, one of the north windows being then blocked up, and for two centuries the gallery remained a prominent feature of the interior. It was a fashion which commonly prevailed until the Victorian period. Documents of the early nineteenth century refer to it as the Singing Gallery, indicating that the choir was then lodged there.

During the years 1827–30 the gallery was restored with a new front of wainscot oak. In 1839 the

clerk's desk was placed there. But times were rapidly changing. The Catholic Revival started by the Oxford Movement shortened the life of the gallery, and in 1845 all traces of it were removed.

CHURCH BELLS

In the collections of Dr. Hearne, the following passage occurs, written 18th August 1717 :

> There is a tradition at Medmenham that there were in the Norman first Conquest 4 bells in the Parish Church there, and that in the Reigne of Richard the first, he being taken prisoner at his Returne from the Holy Lande one of the Bells was sold to help pay his Ransome.
>
> Hearne's *Collections*, vol. vi.,
> Oxford Historical Society, 1902.

Most local traditions seem to possess some residuum of fact, but no contemporary document has yet been discovered to support the above statement. Many ancient records of that time still remain to be explored and indexed. When they appear, they may confirm and explain local traditions, such as the above, which cannot at present be proved.

The earliest trace of bells in Medmenham Church is in an inventory taken 6 and 7 Edward VI (1552–3), when there were three bells and a hand-bell. No church in Buckinghamshire had then more than five bells, and only twelve churches in the county possessed even that number. The majority of churches had three bells, the sacred number of the Trinity.

There are comparatively few bells in this neighbourhood of date earlier than 1600. The bells of Medmenham and of many other churches all belong to the seventeenth century. It was a time of unusual activity in the casting or recasting of church bells, due largely to the introduction of change-ringing into England. The following inscriptions appear on

THE BELLS OF MEDMENHAM CHURCH (1624–1691)

(*On the left-hand side, beyond the tenor bell, is the staging for a fourth bell*)

" Think, when the bells do chime
'Tis Angels' music ; therefore come not late.
God then deals blessings : if a king did so,
Who would not haste, nay give, to see the show ? "

GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1632)

To face p. 257.

the bells, the figures in brackets representing their respective diameters in inches :

MEDMENHAM. S. Peter.

1. (*On Crown :*) HENRY DEH NE

(*Ordinary position :*)

WILLIAM BLVNELL (D) C W S K 1691 (28½)

2. THIS BELL WAS MADE I624 (31¼)

3. (34¾)

†OHN KEENE †EREMY BR†DEN C□W H▽K † ∞66

The treble bell is by Samuel Knight, the last of a well-known family of bell-founders who flourished at Reading. It is the only example in this county of a bell with an inscription on the crown. Henry Deane belonged to an old family of yeomen on the border of Medmenham and Hambleden, while William Blundell, his co-churchwarden, lived at Wittington.

The middle bell is the work of Ellis Knight I, also of Reading, but it has no founder's mark except the characteristic lettering. It was evidently the old Sanctus bell. For generations it was called the Communion bell. The old usage was revived about thirty years ago, and the bell is still chimed for the early Communion.

The tenor bell is by Henry Knight II and Ellis Knight II, who held the Reading foundry between the two representatives named above. The rectangle and shield on this bell are stamped with the marks of the founders. John Keene and Jeremy Briden, churchwardens, were both of families associated for generations with Medmenham.

A local tradition exists to the effect that the bells of Little Marlow were cast for Medmenham to make the ring up to six bells. If that were really contemplated the reference is probably to some older bells cast while the Borlase family held both manors,

because the present bells at Little Marlow are of more modern date.

The bell-staging is of elaborate design with curved struts. It is possibly of sixteenth-century origin, much restored, and probably contemporary with the building of the tower. There is a fourth cage, beyond the present tenor, fitted even to the rope hole in the floor.

In the churchwardens' accounts many instances occur of beer money for the ringers. The disbursements were of sums varying from 1*s.* 6*d.* up to 13*s.* 6*d.*, the payment being apparently in proportion to the amount of joyfulness required :

1750.	April 16th. pd. to John Nibbs for beer on a rejoyesing day	00 : 06 : 00
1756.	for Rining on the Prince of Whales Birthday	0 : 3 : 0
1762.	Sept. 30. pd. to John Sawyer for beer for the Rining on a Rejoyesing day taking the Havana	0 : 1 : 6
1763.	Novem. 12. pd. ringing money . .	0 : 13 : 0

The practice of providing beer money prevailed until recent years, when the beer was commuted to a money payment of 12*s.* a year for ringing at Christmas, Easter, Whitsunday, Ascension Day, and the King's Birthday. Within the past few years this gave place to a collection for the ringers at Christmas among the parishioners.

Old belfry customs are worth recording. There is a midnight ringing at Christmas and New Year's Eves. The ringing on the 5th November was dropped by Walter Hill in deference to a Roman Catholic squire, but it has since been restored as the starting point of a weekly practice before Christmas. A death knell is rung as soon as possible, but not after sundown : tellers 3 × 3 for a male, 2 × 3 for a female ; followed by the age in years ; concluding with an indefinite knell.

CHURCH CHEST

The coffer with two locks provided by the churchwardens in 1538 according to the injunctions of Thomas, Lord Cromwell, reaffirmed by James I, continued its career of usefulness until the nineteenth century, when an item occurs :

1809. pd. Mr. Bond for a church chest . £8 10*s.* 0*d.*

This was an oak chest as high as a table, which stood in the Vestry for a century, containing the parish records. It was sold about 1906, and in its place the Vestry now possesses an iron chest, heavily strapped, with a large lock covering the whole of the lid, probably of mediæval design and foreign workmanship.

THE CHURCHWARDENS

The office of churchwarden in former days was no sinecure ; he was entrusted with much responsible authority and with wide discretionary powers. In ancient episcopal synods the bishops summoned creditable persons out of every parish to attest any disorders of the clergy and people. They became afterwards a kind of empanelled jury of two or more persons in every parish, to present all heretics and other irregular persons, and to maintain the fabric of the church at the charge of all the inhabitants, or such as occupy houses or lands within the parish.

In an old book, which formerly belonged to the churchwardens, was the following account of the furnishings which in 1537, during the reign of Henry VIII, were acknowledged to be the property of Medmenham Church, John Russell and William Moore then being the churchwardens :

> Imprimis, 2 copes, 3 vestments without suet, one with suet, a herse cloth, a canopy cloth, 2 diaper towels, one covelett, 2 case cloths, a sepulchre cloth, one Lent cloth, 2 towels and

> altar cloth, 2 cross cloths, a stremer cloth, 2 crosses, a corporax with cloth, 2 cushions, — leads of holy water pots, 2 basons, an ewer, with 2 bells clappers, 2 brazen pots, with 2 pillows.

In the Act of Uniformity of 1559 the churchwardens were required by law to see that all parishioners attended church on Sundays and Holy days ; also that—

> every person so offending, shall forfeite for every such offence twelve pens, to be levied by the Churchewardens of the Parishe where suche offence shalbee doon, to thuse of the Poore of the same Parishe of the Gooddes Landes and Tenementes of suche offendour, by waye of Distresse.
>
> 1 Eliz. cap. 2.

According to a Proclamation against Sectaries, issued 3rd October 1580, the churchwardens were also expected to seek out for a condign punishment—

> persons who do secretly in corners make privy assemblies of divers simple unlearned people, and do then teach them damnable heresies, directly contrary to divers of the principal articles of our belief and Christian faith.

These duties were impressed upon churchwardens with a solemn exhortation charging them to execute their office—

> as they will answer not only afore God . . . but also will avoid her Majesties indignitie, which they ought not escape, if they shall be found negligent or careless in the execution of their authoritie.

The enforcement of discipline over the laity became a burden to every simple-minded Englishman. The efforts of Archbishop Laud to impose it more rigorously on a later generation did much to foster Puritanism and to encourage the Commonwealth movement. The laity who refused to come to church, or came merely to hear the sermon, who frequented parish churches other than their own, or threatened the churchwardens in the discharge of their duties, together with the drunken, the impure, and the

seditious, were presented by the churchwardens to the Bishop for punishment. Among the presentations from Medmenham occur the following examples :

> Mrs. Alice Duffield, widow, presented for not coming to church since All Hallows last and not receiving communion this Easter, 25 May 1636, says she lives about ½ mile from the church and the waters are sometimes out so that she cannot come.
> She was dwelling in Berkshire at Easter.
> Thomas Pullin and his wife did not receive communion at Easter. The wife says her husband had hurt a man and was in some trouble about him, so he did not come, and she did not because he did not.
>
> *Archd. Papers for Bucks.* (Bodleian), c. 230, Medmenham. Churchwardens' Presentment.

CHURCH-RATES

The only volume of church accounts now surviving extends from Easter, 1747, to Easter, 1855. The average expenditure was £12 a year, with occasional increases considerably beyond the average when repairs to the fabric and churchyard became necessary. The following announcement is written inside the cover of the book :

> 1749, May 21. It was agreed at a Vestry holden in the Parish Church of Medmanham, to pay for cotching Six Foxes one Vixon Fox and five young Foxes already cotcht the old fox allowed three groats, for the young foxes allowed one shilling a piece allowed for killing and destroying Badgers within this Parish one shilling a badger four pence for a powl cat four pence for a hedge hog and three pence a duzen for disstroying of sparrows.
>
> Signed by Churchwardens and Overseers.

This schedule of prices was strictly followed for more than a century. In the year 1827 as many as 548 sparrows were slain. The obituary notices of foxes, badgers, and "powl cats" are comparatively few.

The accounts of expenditure on the church, the services and necessary business of the church, were kept separately from the money spent in poor relief, although the source of income was the same. The money was raised by church-rates levied, according to immemorial custom, on persons in respect of their occupation of lands or houses situate in the parish. Much litigation and many disputes arose over the payment of this rate, until the Compulsory Church-Rates Abolition Act of 1868 changed the situation. The parishioners of every ancient parish are still bound by common law to repair and sustain the fabric of the church, except that the cost of all repairs to the chancel falls upon the great tithe-owners of the parish, who are responsible for keeping in good condition that part of the fabric. The last ordinary church-rate levied in Medmenham was $1\frac{1}{2}d.$ in the pound, approved at a Vestry on Easter Monday, 13th April 1868. From that time the system has prevailed of inviting subscriptions, so that thereafter the following item for several years regularly appears :

> 1871, April 10. It was agreed to ask for a subscription when required by the Churchwardens.

The chancel was not regarded as part of the general fabric. It was the duty of the great tithe-owners, represented in Medmenham by the lord of the manor, to keep the chancel in good repair. On 15th April 1873 " a rate on the Great Tithe-owners for the repairs of the Chancel at $1\frac{1}{2}d.$ per acre was allowed " at the Vestry Meeting, but it was never collected. The subject was revived again fifteen years later (2nd April 1888), when an additional $1\frac{1}{2}d.$ per acre was allowed, increased to $2d.$ per acre in 1890. It proved a hardy annual at the Vestry Meetings until Walter Hill resigned, when the subject disappeared from the minute-book.

CHURCHYARD WALLS

While the repair of the church fabric was a charge upon the church-rates, the responsibility for maintaining the fences in good condition was shared out between the parishioners in proportion to their respective property holdings.

1809, April 12th.
At a publick vestry held for the repairs of the Church Yard, it was agreed that the following allotment of the Fence of the Churchyard should take place instead of that made in the year 1771. Beginning at the West End next to the Moor, their respective names now stand :—

Josh. Copestake Townsend Esq.	33 feet
Mr. Joseph Hobbs, for Woodend and Hallowicks	83 feet
Mr. Wm. Fisher for Lodge Farm	56 feet
Mr. Hobbs for Bockmore	45 feet
Miss Batting (now Winter)	17 feet
Mrs. Scott	55 feet
Catherine Osborn	8 feet
Edward Richardson	25 feet
Mr. Edwd. Sawyer	33 feet
Mrs. Scott for the Abby	22 feet
Wm. Lee Antonie Esq. for the Woods	95 feet
Catherine Osborn	16 feet
Mrs. Blackwell	35 feet
Mr. James Sawyer	30 feet
Sir Wm. Clayton, Bart.	25 feet

Signed : Richard Hunt, Vicar.

Edw. Sawyer, Edm. Deane } Churchwardens.

J. C. Townsend, Rt. Moore, Thos. Osborne } Inhabitants.

On the interior face of the churchyard wall will be found in places lettered slabs marking the portions of the boundary wall for which the respective parties were responsible.

VESTRY RECORDS

After the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, when parish relief was severed from ecclesiastical affairs, the resolutions of the Vestry were preserved in minute-books. Some few extracts will illustrate the wide range of its deliberations :

> 1837, March 8. The Churchwardens delivered the Archdeacon's injunction that no corpse be permitted to be interred within the Church walls except in a leaden coffin.
>
> 1838, March 29. John Belcher was appointed at £2 a year to occasionally inspect the Hurley Lock "and see that the water is not kept above the limit laid down by the Commissioners."
>
> 1840, November 10. The expense of providing fuel for the heating stoves of the Church, estimated at £5 2*s*. 0*d*. a year, was apportioned between "persons enabled to pay for the comfort afforded."
>
> 1841, April 16. It was unanimously agreed that a Petition against the Repeal of the Corn Laws be presented to both Houses of Parliament, and that the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos be requested to present that to the House of Lords, and Sir William Lawrence Young, Bart., that to the House of Commons.

The business recorded in the current volume is of such recent date that it must be left for another generation to discriminate what may be of outstanding interest. The value of all things is best judged in the long perspective of history, and there the verdict must rest.

THE CHURCH ENDOWMENT

The parochial system had really no creator, and the endowment of religion was similarly a matter of gradual development; when a great man built a church upon his estate, it naturally ministered to those "dwelling beside" (L. *parœcia*) the place of worship. Thus the district became the parish; and as the lordship

became more clearly defined, so the parish extended to coincide with the same territorial boundary. In just the same way tithe was at first among Christians a voluntary gift, a system inherited from the ancients and particularly common among the Jews. The giving of tithe is first heard of among Christians in the fourth century, when it was a matter of conscience and not of law.

When Christianity became established among the Saxons in England the payment of church dues was made obligatory. The Dooms of Ine, King of Wessex (*fl.* 690), which is the earliest surviving collection of West Saxon law, enacted under pecuniary penalty the payment of church-scot, consisting principally of corn, every Martinmas for the roof and hearth owned the preceding mid-winter. This was really a tax for church expenses, because the clergy were then maintained by lands given to the church, and by voluntary offerings. The first statute enforcing the payment of tithe was enacted by the Council of Chelsea in 787, and the Kings of England present at that Council accepted its proceedings, and made them valid in their own territory, so that the payment of tithe, which had hitherto been a voluntary offering, was then by secular law made compulsory.

While the payment of tithe was imposed by law, some discretion was left to the giver as to its allocation. In theory it was due to the bishop of the district, for distribution among the church, the clergy, and the poor ; but a thegn who had given some of his tithe to charity, or who maintained a church and burial-ground on his estate, was permitted by law to deduct any such payments from the amount of his contribution, and in this way a system of parochial tithe endowment became established.

The tithes according to law are a tenth part of the annual increase arising from three kinds of property :

1. Praedial tithes were those arising immediately from the ground, as grain of all sorts, hay, wood, fruits, and herbs.

2. Mixed tithes were those arising from things immediately nourished by the ground, as colts, calves, lambs, chickens, milk, cheese, eggs.

3. Personal tithes were a tenth part of the clear annual profit from labour and industry, fisheries and the like.

When a considerable portion of the manor of Medmenham, together with the advowson of the church, was bestowed upon the Abbey of Woburn, it became necessary to determine what share of the emoluments should be appropriated to the Vicar. This was decided by Bishop Hugh Wells, who began to preside over the Diocese of Lincoln in 1209, and resided for some part of his episcopate at Fingest. Several endowments of vicarages in this neighbourhood are dated during his time. This was due to a recent papal permission for impropriating tithes, by which the monastery received as much as possible, and the stipend of the incumbent became a small and often a hopelessly inadequate amount, an evil which was intensified when, at the dissolution, rectorial tithes came into lay possession. A translation of the endowment of the vicarage is here reproduced :

> Medmenham Vicarage in the Parish Church of Medmenham which belongs to the Abbot and Convent of the Cistercian Order there as constituted by the authority of the Convent consists in the whole altar offering of the same church, and in the tithes of sheaves of one hide which Ralph de Medmenham and his tenants hold, and in the tithes of half a virgate which the same Ralph holds of the land of Widmer, and in the tithes of half a virgate which the same Ralph holds of the Abbey of Medmenham and is called Mullond, and in the tithes of one virgate which John and Thomas de Radells the men of the Abbot of Medmenham hold, and half an acre of meadow in Cherlemed according as the lot shall fall for one year, and in two acres of arable land with a suitable house.
>
> *Ancient Book of Endowments*, Lincoln Cathedral.

It will be observed from this document that all the

land which the church may have possessed, and which probably formed its most valuable and ancient endowment, was left in the hands of the monks, except the ground attached to the glebe house and half an acre in Charlmead, which gave the parson sufficient pasture to feed a horse, with the right to sit on the river-bank and fish for his dinner. In the Taxation of Pope Nicholas, made in the year 1291, the benefice of Medmenham was valued at 12 marks (£8) a year, out of which $5\frac{1}{2}$ marks (£3 13*s.* 4*d.*) was payable to the vicar. When the *Valor* of 1535 was compiled the vicarage was returned as being worth £5 17*s.* per annum, of which one-tenth formerly rendered to the pope was then claimed by the king. As money decreased in purchasing power, so there was a gradual rise in the value of the endowments. During the reign of Queen Anne the net income of Medmenham Vicarage was returned at £45 a year, and, being less than the minimum £50, it was exempted for the future from the payment of first-fruits and tenths.

After the dissolution of Medmenham Abbey, the tithe with which the foundation was partly endowed, amounting to £5 4*s.* 1*d.* a year, also the lands which had once belonged to the church, were converted to secular uses, so that approximately two-thirds of the ancient endowment of Medmenham Church was granted out and sold to laymen, whose successors still possess the lands and receive the tithes or have consolidated their value. The Crown continued to collect tenths on these lay rectorial tithes, farming them out to laymen, until such payments on poor livings were abolished by statute (6 Anne, c. 24, 1707). At that time the rectorial tenths were possessed by the heirs and assigns of Thomas Mate.

Parcel of the late Monastery of Bustleham *alias* Bisham.
Annual rent or tenth reserved issuing out of the Rectory of Medmenham now or late in the tenure of Knightley Duffield

gent. Long since sold to Thomas Mate his heirs and assigns for ever. Rendering therefor at Michaelmas only by the year 22*s*.

Particulars of Fee Farm Rents, 13, m. 33, No. 190, Chas. II.

As years went on tithes in kind were gradually compounded for by a variable money-payment. The following schedule represents a valuation of the vicarial tithe of Medmenham about the year 1770 :

Schedule of Tithes.

	£	*s*.
424 acres arable and meadow land at 2*s*. 6*d*. . .	53	
Vicarage House, garden, meadow and ½ acre in meadow and churchyard, valued . . .	7	10
	£60	10

Underwood is titheable which is cut every 7th or 8th year, on Mr. Kirton's estate, Mr. Morton's estate, and Mr. Duffield's estate.

Offerings from every person above 16.
Hops in kind. Cows 1*s*. 3*d*. each. Foals 3*d*. each.
Pigs one in 7 or 10 or 2*d*. Honey and Wax the 10th or worth in money.
Wool in kind or worth. Lambs one in 7 or 10 or 2*s*. 6*d*.
Turnips, poultry, gardens 1*d*. 2*d*. 3*d*. 4*d*. as the size is.
Orchards in kind or worth in money.
Underwoods the 10th of the value.
Water and eyots or eights of sallows, geese, turkeys and eggs.
Agistment of sheep, horses or cattle, milk and fish, the abbey water excepted.

At the opening of the nineteenth century a voluntary system of composition was adopted by the tithe-payers of Medmenham, and each occupier of land was assessed at a certain annual amount. A survey of vicarial tithe for Medmenham was made in 1802, and the following proportions were then settled as a standard valuation :

OWNER.	OCCUPIER.	PROPERTY.	APPORTIONMENT. £	s.	d.
Jesus College	Sir W. Clayton	Whitton Farm	20	0	0
Do.	Thos. Williams	Newlock House	1	2	0
Do.	Thos. Finch	Cottages		10	0
Robert Scott	Himself	Medlicotts	13	3	10
Do.	Not named	States Farm, and Close below mill	2	14	0
W. Lee Antonie	W. Fisher	Lodge Farm }	22	15	0
Do.	John Fisher	Bockmore Farm }			
Richard Fisher	John Fisher	Hollowicks	32	10	0
W. Lee Antonie	Edw. Sawyer	Not named	19	14	0
Do.	W. Blackwell	Do.	9	17	6
Miss Batten	—	Do.		4	0
—	John Webb	Do.		5	0
			£122	15	4

During the earlier years of the war with France (1793–1815) the increase of values had been enormous. Wheat and general farm-produce rose to famine prices, and the value of tithe increased in proportion. Richard Hunt was forever giving notice to the tithe payers of an increase in the valuation. The same disturbed conditions prevailed elsewhere. These constant bickerings were finally settled by the Tithe Commutation Act of 1836, followed by a survey of every parish to decide at what proportion each piece of land should be taxed, when the vicarial tithes of Medmenham were commuted at £200 per annum. The valuation was to fluctuate annually according to the average price of corn. This average per £100 has varied from £66 10*s.* 9*d.* in 1901, when it reached its lowest figure, to £109 3*s.* 11*d.* in 1918, and at the latter figure the valuation was fixed for seven years. By the Tithe Act, 1891, the responsibility for payment was charged upon the owner of the land, and not, as was previously the case, upon the occupier.

The nominal value of the benefice of Medmenham

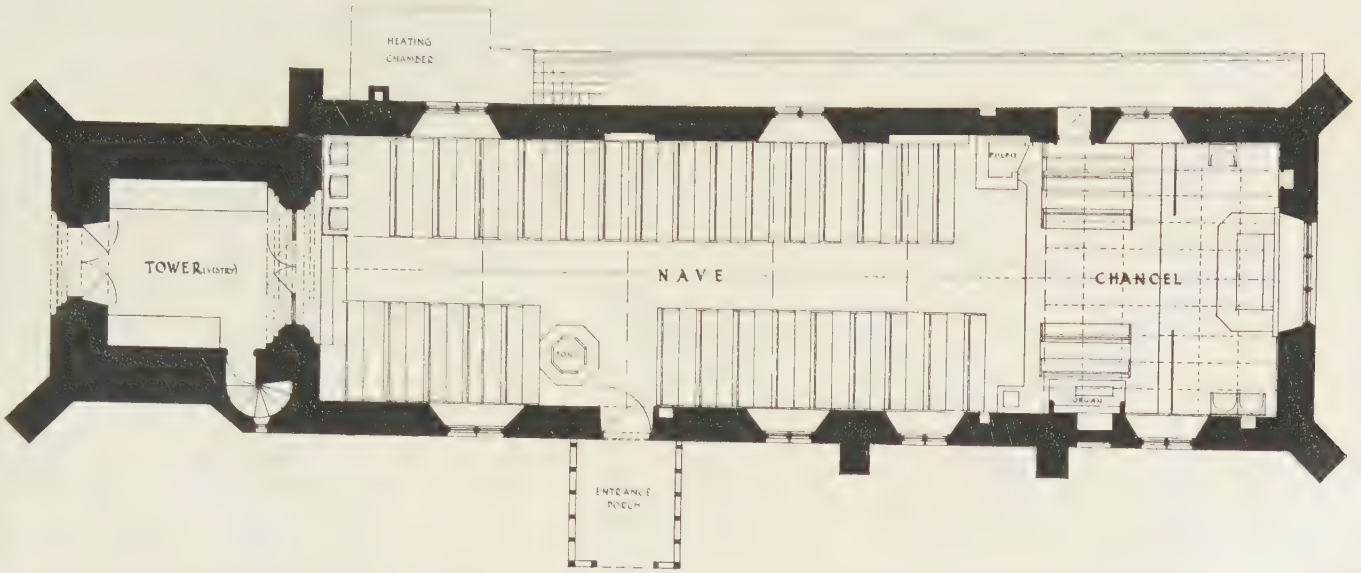
in tithes is still £200 per annum, payable in the following proportions, with a glebe house and three acres of land :

NAME OF LAND OWNER.	APPORTIONED TITHES. £	s.	d.
Rt. Hon. Viscount Devonport, Wittington	79	1	6
Mrs. Hornby Lewis, Danesfield	75	9	4
Mr. A. G. Bendir, Medmenham Abbey	15	2	11
Mr. J. Balkwell, Wood End Farm	13	3	2
Mr. D. A. Longbottom, Wood End House	7	4	3
Rt. Hon. Viscount Hambleden, Greenlands	4	15	9
Mr. F. J. Randall, Lower Wood End Farm	3	5	1
Mr. S. Keene, Hawkins Farm	1	14	0
Mr. A. Mackenzie, Lower Wood End House	0	4	0
	£200	0	0

In the old parish books of Medmenham (1693–1843) the parson's tithe was never rated. He simply contributed to local taxation on the valuation of his vicarage and glebe. The rating of tithe was based upon an untenable interpretation of an ancient statute by which tithe was dragged into the Parochial Assessment Act of 1836. The case against this view is very plain. Tithe is a permanent mortgage upon the fruit of industry. It is not land either in fact or in law, and it is inequitable that the parson should be the only individual whose personal income is first rated for local expenditure, then is charged with land tax, and finally is assessed for income tax. This incongruity with the enormous growth of public expenditure would have converted many clerical incomes into a minus quantity. By the Tithe Rent-charge (Rates) Act 1899, the parson receives an abatement of one half the local rates, which is refunded to the district authority by the Treasury. The Tithe Rent-charge (Rates) Act 1920 gave complete temporary relief to certain livings.

ST. PETER'S CHURCH MEDMENHAM

PLAN AS EXISTING 1923



W. H. R. MACKENZIE F.R.I.B.A.
ARCHITECT TO VICTORIA ST.
LONDON S.W.1

To face p. 170.

HISTORICAL NOTES

MEDMENHAM PARISH CHURCH.

Historical Notes.

A.D.

650. The first Saxon church appeared in Medmenham, probably beech-timbered and plastered.

1160. Nave of present church built, and tower at west end, with sacristy entered through north door. *By Hugh de Bolebec II.*

1204. Charter from King John confirming grant of certain lands and tithes of the manor of Medmenham bestowed upon the Abbey of Woburn, Beds, for founding a cell of the Cistercian Order. *By Eghelyn de Courtenay.*

1241. Confirmation of certain land with the advowson of Medmenham Church granted to the Abbot of Woburn. *By Isabel de Bolebec, "late Countess of Oxford."*

1350. Chantry Chapel added north of nave. *Temp. John de la Lude of Wittington.*
(*This transept in 1718 was reported to be in a ruinous condition, and was soon afterwards pulled down.*)

1450. Tower rebuilt, and chancel with rood-loft added at east end. *Temp. Geoffrey Pole, of Wittington.*

1495. Open timbered roof and enlarged windows in Perpendicular style to nave, also bell-framing with curved struts in tower. *Temp. Sir Richard Pole, K.G., of Bockmer.*

1638. Gallery erected across west end of nave, approached by stairs on north side. *Temp. Sir John Borlase, of Bockmer.*

1702. Timbered roof of nave and chancel partly obscured by plastered ceiling.

1706. New lead roof to tower.

1720. Chancel repaired, north transept pulled down, and entrance to transept built up.

1830. Gallery restored with new front of wainscot oak, also new seating to nave east of gallery. (The cost, £138, was raised by a church-rate.)

1839. Three-decker pulpit superseded by six-sided pulpit of carved oak panels and the present lectern.

1844 and 1845. Stone tracery renewed and rebuilt in chancel windows; new doorways cut north and south of chancel; ceiling of chancel decorated with "gaudy colours and golden stars." Stone reredos with pinnacles and crockets, aumbry with ogee head of similar decoration; and stone altar in chancel.

1844 and 1845. Altar afterwards broken up and removed by order of the Archdeacon of Buckinghamshire, and holy table of 1637 restored, but no marble top.
Carved octagonal font substituted for the original Norman circular specimen.
Nave gallery removed.
(*The above alterations* (1839–45) *were the benefaction of Mr. Chas. R. S. Scott-Murray, of Danesfield, who joined the Roman Communion soon afterwards.*)

1876. Seating of nave continued west of south door. Cost subscribed by the parishioners.

1878. Organ installed at a cost of £120. Subscribed by the parishioners.

1906. Chancel floor raised and re-tiled ; stone reredos removed ; oak choir stalls and vestry cupboards provided. *By Mr. Robert W. Hudson, of Danesfield.*

1914. Roof of church restored and re-tiled. *By children of Selina Winter* (*Rev. S. M. Winter and Miss Winter*).

1919. Panelling to chancel (part) ; new altar and pulpit of carved oak.

1921. Oak screen erected between tower and nave. North-west nave window restored and glazed.

1924. North transept rebuilt with organ chamber, and new organ installed ; new prayer-desk in choir, and panelling to chancel completed. Architect : Mr. A. G. R. Mackenzie, F.R.I.B.A., Lower Wood End, and London.
(*The above alterations* (1919–24) *were the benefaction of Mr. and Mrs. Hornby Lewis, of Danesfield.*)

1924. Seating completed at north-west end of nave. *By Mr. Arthur Bendir, of Medmenham Abbey.*

(*The building dates down to* 1495 *are not exact, but approximate.*)

Features of Interest.

Ancient holy water stoup having recess with pointed head near south door.
Piscina with pointed head and square bowl in south wall of nave, apparently used before east end of church was built.
Similar piscina in chancel, but with circular bowl.
Parish chest in tower, of heavily-strapped iron, large lock with three bolts covering whole of lid, of mediæval design and foreign workmanship.

Interior Dimensions.

Chancel, 18½ feet by 20 feet.

Nave, 52½ feet by 20 feet.

West Tower, 12 feet square.

Bells and Ornaments.

1624. Middle bell cast by Ellis Knight. Diameter, 31¼ inches. Weight, 6 cwt.

1637. Communion table of marble-slab top on oak framing; also silver-gilt chalice and paten. *By Lady Borlase, of Bockmer.*

1663. Pewter flagon. *By Lady Borlase, of Bockmer.*

1666. Treble bell cast by Henry Knight. Diameter, 28½ inches. Weight, 4¾ cwt.

1691. Tenor bell cast by Ellis Knight II. Diameter, 34¾ inches. Weight, 7½ cwt.

1835. Silvered Communion flagon. *By parochial subscription.*

1845. Brass candlesticks and vases. *By Mr. Chas. Scott-Murray, of Danesfield.*

1903 to 1908. Silk frontals for Communion table. *By Mrs. Hudson, Danesfield* (white), *Lady Dawson, The Abbey* (green), *Miss White, Lee Cottage* (purple).

1907. Brass altar-cross in memory of John White (1899) and Gertrude C. L. White (1903). *By their family.*

1907. Brass water-pitcher for font. Oak table in vestry. *By Mrs. Hudson, of Danesfield.*

1910. Lamps for lighting nave and chancel. *By Mrs. Hudson, of Danesfield.*

Stained-Glass Windows.

Chancel : East.

1845. Three-light windows : The Saviour (centre), St. Peter (north), St. Paul (south). Executed by Willement. *Presented by Mrs. Charles Scott-Murray.*

Chancel : North and South.

1845. Two-light windows : St. Matthew and St. Mark (north), St. Luke and St. John (south). Executed by Willement. *Presented by Mrs. Charles Scott-Murray.*

Nave : North.

1845. Continental painted medallions : Presentation in Temple, Stations of Cross (two), and Ascension : being remains of six such medallions. *Presented by Mrs. Charles Scott-Murray.*

Nave : South.

1874. To William Henry Caslon. Feeding of the Five Thousand. *Presented by Mr. Caslon's workmen.*

1917. To Lieut.-Colonel Arthur Murray Pirie, D.S.O. Jerusalem in background ; Colonel Pirie in foreground as Crusader. Executed by Mr. Romaine Walker, F.R.I.B.A. *Presented by Lady Dawson.*

Tower.

In the top light of west window is the only surviving scrap of mediæval painted glass. The chancel and west windows, and possibly the nave windows also, were once filled with beautiful stained glass.

Memorials in the Church.

1412. Richard Levyng and (1419) Alice his wife, of Medmenham. (*Brass in aisle.*)

1488. John Colyngeryge, buried " before the Rood." (*Probably nameless slab near chancel steps.*)

c. 1500. Arthur Pole, son of Sir Richard, K.G., and elder brother of Cardinal Reginald Pole, of Bockmer. Buried in chancel. (*The tomb remained until* 1718, *but has since disappeared.*)

1677. Mrs. Ann Danvers. Arms : Sable, a chevron between 3 mullets or. (*Framed panel in nave.*)

1728. Francis Duffield, of Medmenham Abbey. (*Stone lozenge in chancel.*)

1758. Francis Duffield, of the White House, Medmenham, and member of Medmenham Club. (*Stone lozenge in chancel.*)

1808. Robert Scott, of Danesfield. Arms : or, within a bordure engrailed sable ; charged with three escalops arg., on a bend az. A mullet between two crescents of the field, impaling. Quarterly, 1 and 4 az., two bendlets between two phaeons. Or, 2 and 3 arg., a mullet az. Crest : on a wreath, a stag proper, attired or.

1834. Emma Scott, widow of Robert Scott.

1836. William Townsend and (1839) Anna Lane Townsend, of Wood End House.

1837. Richard Hunt, Vicar of Medmenham; also his daughters Emma (1811), Alice (1819), and Frances (1830). (*Stone slab in aisle.*)

1837. Charles Scott Murray, of Danesfield, and (1862) Augusta Eliza Scott-Murray, of Hambleden, widow of Charles Scott-Murray.
(*The funeral hatchment in the nave represents the full armorial bearings of Charles Scott Murray.*)

1837. Elizabeth Eleanor Murray, of Berkhampstead, sister of Robert Scott. (*Mural brass in chancel.*)

1843. Elizabeth Story (1797), Jane Lane (1812), Elizabeth Townsend (1818), Ann Townsend (1819). Now near pulpit and lectern.
(*The originals of the last three were marble lozenges within the sanctuary. They were removed in* 1843 *and copied on brass and another added. They were placed in their present position in* 1919.)

1872. Frederick W. Harris, Vicar of Medmenham.

1891. James Ralston, of Kings Barn.
(*The burials up to Augusta Scott-Murray were all in church; from Elizabeth Murray onward they were in churchyard; but James Ralston was not buried at Medmenham.*)

1919. Frank Allman, *Alfred Bradfield, Harry Carpenter, Reuben Dean, John Dobson, George Gardiner, James Hobbs, John Charles Hold, Walter Kerley, Henry Osborne, *Albert Oxlade, Henry Potter, Frederick Smith, †Stephen Spiers, and Henry Tills.
All men of Medmenham who laid down their lives in the Great War.
** Died in England and buried at Medmenham. Those not marked were buried in Flanders. † Died in the Near East.*
(*The vault of the Scott-Murray family is on north side of chancel, and of the Duffield family on south side.*)

CHAPTER IX

THE LIFE OF THE VILLAGE

" Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay.
Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade,
A breath can make them as a breath has made ;
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroy'd, can never be supplied."

The Deserted Village

OLIVER GOLDSMITH (1728–74)

CHAPTER IX

THE LIFE OF THE VILLAGE

HE history of England has been lived in its towns and villages, often far out of sight, and there is scarcely a life which has not left its mark somewhere. Romance and tragedy are interwoven at every turn. Among the tiny villages of England, there are few which have maintained so continuous a place in history as Medmenham. The changing currents of events seldom left it untouched. Many passing political storms have left their trace. Its associations number men and women who have been famous in their day. But we wish to write here rather of the known and unknown men and women of the village whose influence in their generation has made the place what it now is.

What kind of lives did those men and women in this village live hundreds of years ago? Were they happy and contented? What were their friendships? What were their difficulties? The pageant of history seems to have passed so silently along. There must have been many turns in the tide of affairs. The church tower must have looked down upon much human gladness and many human sorrows since centuries ago it rose up, the joy and the pride of its first founders. And what strange stories the walls of the old houses would tell, if they could only speak, of the struggles, the hopes, the loves, and the hardships, of days other than our own!

FEUDAL TENURE

About a fourth to a third of the manor land was usually retained by the overlord as his demesne, and

the remainder as time went on was distributed among tenants who were bound to render him personal service. There were four hides of land in the demesne of Medmenham Manor, equivalent to 480 Domesday acres, or about one-third of the total area of the parish. In the demesne would have been seen the lordship house, where the manor courts were held, and near at hand the farm buildings, dovecots, and mill for grinding the corn of the tenants. It is impossible now to say just the limits of the enclosure or demesne at Medmenham. No ancient maps have ever come to light, nor have the court rolls of the manor yet been discovered. The manor demesne was east and north of a line drawn from Medmenham Mead (near Frogg Mill Weir) to Medmenham Gate, and thence to the quarry at Westfield. South of this line was the village common, and between that and the Thames were the Abbey lands.

By the feudal system all lands were held in chief as from the King, under a military tenure. The great vassals of the Crown, including the barons, the bishops, and heads of religious houses, were obliged to provide a certain number of knights, completely equipped and with attendants, who were to be available for active service in the field forty days a year. Military service was the currency of the day. Thus the baron discharged his service to the King, and the under-tenants fulfilled their obligations to the baron as their lord. Among the principal barons of Henry II the quota of Earl Ferrers was eighty knights, the Earl Warenne owed sixty knights, and the Earl of Salisbury forty knights. The *servitium* of the barony of Bolebec, which included Medmenham, was ten knights. Among the church fiefs the Bishop of Lincoln owed allegiance for sixty knights, and the Abbot of Abingdon thirty knights. These knights were those who held fees in the barony, and a knight's fee was a certain

amount of real estate. The bishop or baron who enfeoffed insufficient knights to discharge his *servitium debitum* was obliged to hire substitutes for the balance.

One main cause of the Domesday Survey was to settle what military service was to be furnished from each of the king's vassals. The Norman system of feudal tenure was developed out of the Saxon five-hide unit, and the service of a tenant-in-chief was determined by the number of such units which he possessed, but the valuation of the barony seems also to have been taken into account when determining the quota to be provided by each vassal of the Crown. The knight's pay on active service was 8*d.* a day, and 1*d.* a day for his man-servant.

In the Great Scutage of 1159, on the occasion of the expedition against Toulouse, the lower tenants were allowed to commute their personal service in the field by a money payment, thus introducing for the first time the principle of direct taxation towards the cost of maintaining an army in the field. This levy was at the rate of two marks on the fee of each under-tenant of the church and of the lay barons, also an arbitrary *donum* from church tenants-in-chief, non-feudal religious houses, towns, sheriffs, jewries, and moneyers. Dr. Stubbs reckoned the total payment of the Church for the expedition was £3700.

THE NORMAN LORDSHIP

The rights of the lord in the community were of three kinds : those connected with customary and personal service, certain privileges arising out of the occupation of lands, and other powers proceeding from political jurisdiction. The Norman process of feudalisation tended to the depression of the tenant and the exaltation of the overlord, so that custom developed into exaction, and tribute sometimes extended to confiscation. In any parts of the barony

held by knight-service the overlord during the minority of any tenant became guardian of the heir and administrator of the estate. He rendered no account of his stewardship, but exacted a fine for quitting the land when the heir came of age. If the ward were a girl the overlord could dispose of her in marriage, a privilege commonly regarded as a matter of sale and barter.

THE LANDLESS MAN

The peasants of the lordship in varying degrees were the property of their lord, and the mark which determined their respective rank was the nature and extent of the labour rent they rendered to the overlord. The serf was a landless man of the slave class, the cottar, the bordar, the household servant or hired labourer, bound to help on the home farm or in the house at all times of the year. Such a man was the property of his master. He paid head-money if he wished to remove from the lordship in search of hire elsewhere. Even in his new home he remained the property of his original lord, as did any land which he might acquire.

THE VILLEIN, OR COPY-HOLDER

The villein was bound to render service in the ploughing and sowing of autumn and spring as well as the ingathering of the harvest, and the villein could render this duty personally or by deputy. The extent of his service rested entirely on tradition, but the number of works and plough-teams, the fines, the heriots, which the lord might claim was determined by the court roll of the lordship, a copy of which was the villein's title-deed, so that in a later generation the villein became known as a copy-holder. The villein was not bound in such a degree that he might not alienate part of his property, although if he disposed

of any portion the rent of the overlord was sometimes increased in the process. The general title of his holding ran "to him and his heirs." His heir was sometimes his eldest son, sometimes his youngest, according to local custom. If he wished to bequeath the land away from the heir—say to a sister away from his son—he had to surrender it and get a new grant to that end.

THE RIGHTS OF THE LORDSHIP

On the marriage of a villein's daughter the lord claimed from the father or guardian a fine varying from 6*d.* to 20*s.*, on the ground that if she married a free man or a stranger the service of her off-spring was lost to the community. A villein who joined the University, or entered Holy Orders, was also fined a variable amount, because in his new way of life he would escape the service of his lord. On the death of a villein the overlord exacted heriot, which was generally the best beast owned by the tenant, and the new tenant was obliged to pay relief. The tenants were compelled to grind their corn at the manor mill. There were also rights of assize, of fealty and service, privileges of framing and administering by-laws, settlement of property disputes, and other customary service, much of which provided revenue for the lordship.

THE CLAIMS OF THE CROWN

The lord in turn rendered tribute to the Crown, for in feudal days the manor, rather than the individual, was the taxable unit, and the income thus derived was the main source of Crown revenue. Each overlord paid a heavy duty on succeeding to his estate ; he contributed an aid in case of the king's capture in war, the knighthood of the king's eldest son, or the marriage of his eldest daughter. Any

heir who was a minor was the ward of the Crown, and profits from the estate during the minority went to the king. If the estate devolved upon an heiress the king was entitled to give her hand in marriage, and the privilege was generally sold to the highest bidder. At the same time it was always open for any heiress to outbid an unwelcome lover, and possibly secure for herself some liberty of selection. One heiress at least of Medmenham Manor claimed this privilege (*see* p. 27).

SETTLEMENT OF MARLOW BOUNDARY

The English lordship was bordered by outlying land beyond the demesne, which virtually was common ground, and only gradually were these remote parts definitely appropriated. It was not until after the Statute of Merton (20 Henry III, 3 c.d. 1236–7) that the delineation of the manor was made more precise, and the boundary settled into a fixed limit. An imperfect record of this survives with regard to the demarcation towards Marlow. The manor boundary was not of necessity coextensive with the parish, or even with the shire. The division between Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire passes through the manor house of Ibstone, and the manor is in both counties, but in the case of Medmenham the boundary of the parish followed the same line as that of the manor.

(1244)
It is commanded to the sheriff of Buckinghamshire that he shall cause to be made a perambulation between the land of Richard de Clare in Marlowe and the land of I. (Isabel) countess of Oxford in Medmeham by oath etc., so that the perambulation be made etc., because the aforesaid Richard and the countess have put themselves in that perambulation.

Cal. Close Rolls, 1242–47, p. 260.

THE MANOR COURT

One of the ancient customs which developed out of the Saxon lordship was the institution of a court

to fix and perpetuate the services due from the tenants of the manor. This assembly was subsequently called a Court Baron when it exercised strictly territorial rights; but when the manor also possessed jurisdiction to deal with felony within its borders, and to certify such cases to the King's Justices, it became also a Court of Record or Court Leet. All manors possessed territorial rights, but the powers of Court Leet were only exercised by Crown franchise.

The Court Baron was initiated by the steward reading a quaintly worded document declaring the opening of the Court. He prefaced his announcement with the Norman phrase "Oyez, Oyez," meaning "Hear ye!" which irreverent posterity has corrupted into "O yes." When the court was declared open the steward or bailiff called upon all who owed suit or service to draw near, to make attendance, to answer to their names, and to save their amercements, which meant to pay their fines. The foreman of the jury was then elected, and elaborately sworn to make true presentments. This being done, the jury proceeded to inquire into the state of the village stocks and pound, the conditions of ditches, watercourses, and fences, whether each tenant had performed his quota of boon days in ploughing and harvest, and if the abbot of Medmenham had exceeded his ration of six cows upon the common pasture. They also made returns of any rents or services withheld from the lord of the manor. Then followed the swearing in of new tenants of the manor, the payment of death and succession duties, also other fines and dues of the manor, according to the customary services inscribed on the Court Roll.

If the manor possessed Court Leet, a constable or tithing man was elected, and sworn in to serve truly the king and the lord of the leet. His duty was to summon the tithing, to arrest vagabonds, and to

preserve peace within the lordship. Then came the appointment of persons to taste the ale and test the bread of the community, because any infringements of the standard quality were punished in the Court Leet by fines, which were a lucrative source of income to the manor. In cases where a manor had no franchise, the powers of Court Leet were exercised by the Hundred Court. Upon the conclusion of the above ceremonies the steward announced that all persons present were " hereby discharged of their attendance at this court " until summoned again ; then the whole company adjourned to partake of a feast provided by the lord of the manor.

In course of centuries the Court Leet of the manor gave place to the Vestry, and the Vestry begat the Parish Council, but the constable has remained the servant of them all ; supplementary to the police-force provided by a bureaucratic government, and entrusted with the unpleasant duties which nobody wants.

The tenants of Medmenham Abbey did not appear at the manor court. The Abbot held his own court for the tenants upon his own lands. When the Abbey was suppressed there still remained a " steward of the Court," who did not fail to take his fee of 6*s.* 8*d.* (half a mark) even when no Court was held (*Mins. Accts.*, Hen. VIII, 109, 234).

THE HUNDRED COURT

The tithing originally consisted of a community of ten freemen householders, who became answerable to their lord and the king for each other's good behaviour. Each tithing was a tiny village state, the elected head being an Ealderman or Berseholder. The tithings were the units which together formed the Hundred Court, in which disputes were settled and prisoners were tried by the King's Justices. If any member of

the community offended against the public laws, and with the knowledge of the tithing made good his escape, the tithing was obliged to pay in the Hundred Court the prescribed fine for the crime committed, as will be observed in the following extract :

> Hundred of Dustelbeg.
>
> The tithing of John de Bekerne of Medmeham half a mark for the flight of William le fulur and Richard his brother.
>
> *Roll of the King's Court*, No. 4, m. 4, Richard I, 1192.

THE KING'S COURT

Any cause of a more complicated nature was sent forward for settlement by a jury in the High Court, much in the same way that higher legal actions are still tried by a Judge of the High Court on circuit. An example given below will illustrate the kind of tangle they were frequently called upon to unweave. One surprising feature of the case is that women even in those days possessed well-defined rights which could be defended in the Courts of Justice. The particular question arose over Hollywicks, at Wood End, the spelling of which in course of centuries has undergone many changes. It is sometimes Hollywix, or Hollowic, or Holliwics, but all the variations are merely a corruption of the original name, Halwic's. The verdict sets out the terms on which William de Halwic held this land in Medmenham; to wit he paid 12*s*. yearly, did three boon days in the autumn, and gave to the lord one pig every year for the privilege of feeding his swine in the woods.

After the decease of William de Halwic, his daughter Maud, together with the tenement which she inherited, was bestowed by Walter de Bolebec upon Geoffrey Pigace. In course of time Maud died, leaving three daughters ; then having contracted with one Margery a second marriage, Geoffrey Pigace also

died. Margery thereupon claimed one-third of the land which was the widow's portion in her husband's free property ; but the jury decided it was not the free tenement of Geoffrey, maintaining that he had only a life interest by what is known as the Law of Englishry. Therefore upon his decease the free tenement fell to the next of kin of his first wife, represented by her three daughters, Juliana, Cecily, and Felicia.

BUCKS

Jurors come to return their verdict as to whether Geoffrey Picgace formerly husband of Margery Pigace was seised in fee on the day when he married the same Margery of 1½ virgates of land with the appurtenances in Medmenham whereof Margery claims one-third in dower against Roger de True and his wife Juliana, and Cecily, and Felicia sisters of Juliana, so that Geoffrey could dower Margery of one-third part or not.

The jurors say that William de Halwic held that land for life and had a wife by whom he had a certain daughter Maud and whilst he held that land he did service, to wit he paid 12*s.* yearly and did three boondays in the autumn, to wit 2 boondays each of which he did by 4 men providing their food and the third the lord providing food, and he gave to the lord of Medmenham one pig to be quit of pannage, and after his death Geoffrey Pigace spoke with Walter de Bolebec lord of the vill, so that he gave him Maud daughter of William as his wife together with her land, but released him from a part of the service, to wit from everything save 5*s.* And the mother of Maud was for a long time with Geoffrey and Maud, and then withdrew and had her dower from that tenement. They do not think Geoffrey could dower Margery therein, because it was the free tenement of his wife. Margery is in mercy.

Curia Regis Roll, 55, m. 2.

The women of those days were in some respects more advanced than their modern descendants. One of the unexpected facts is that frequently after marriage in mediæval days a woman never took her husband's surname, but retained her own name, and even passed

MEDMENHAM VICARAGE

THE vicarage is probably the oldest place of continuous residence within the manor of Medmenham. For more than a thousand years it has been the home of the village priest. The house was rebuilt, or partly rebuilt, about 1717–20, and since then almost every successive incumbent has, by a series of alterations and amendments, left some trace of his occupation.

To face p. 288.

it on to her children. The last of the Bolebec family is an example. In her married life she was invariably identified by her maiden name: "Isabel de Bolebec, wife of Robert de Ver." After her first husband's death she married Henry de Novant, but remained "Isabel de Bolebec, formerly Countess of Oxford." There is also, about a century later, the case of Isabel de Medmenham, wife of Ralph de Wydyndone. Both during her married state and in her widowhood she constantly remained Isabel de Medmenham.

THE POWER OF MONEY

The verdict in the above dispute concerning Hollywicks sheds an interesting light on the introduction of a money currency. Not only could military service be commuted by a money payment (*see* p. 281), but before the year 1200 the days of barter for labour on the land were also beginning to go. Geoffrey Pigace had succeeded in compounding all his service due to Walter de Bolebec for a money payment of 5*s*. a year, which was a very fair amount when currency was as valuable as it was scarce. The purchasing power of money is never more than a relative matter. Apart from its market value any coinage is worthless. Moreover, as wages have advanced so there has invariably been a proportionate rise in the cost of living. With these thoughts in mind it is instructive to examine a schedule of prices prevailing in Medmenham six hundred years ago, when a well-paid working man earned a penny a day. The particular document is a valuation made at the decease of Ralph de Cobham, who lived at Bolebec Castle, and who rented the manor of Medmenham from John de Warenne, Earl of Surrey, at £40 a year. It will be observed that arable land was let at 4*d*. an acre, meadow land at 2*s*. an acre, fowls were 1*d*. each, geese 2½*d*. each, eggs were

20 for 1*d.*, and the value of the castle with its pastures and gardens was 6*s.* 8*d.* per annum.

Writ dated at Kenilworth 25 March
19 Edward II. (1326).

Inquisition taken at Merelaw before Richard le Wayte escheator 13 April 19 Edw. ij (1326) by the oath of John Staly, Richard de Wygenholte, Thomas de Iuedene, Robert le Schereman, William atte Dene, Roger atte Rokholte, Robert Whytecole, Richard de Lenden, Thomas Cullehog, Walter Prynchard the younger, John atte More, and John de Wygemere, who say that Ralph de Cobeham held nothing of the king in chief in the county of Buckingham, but that he held the manor of Medmenham of John de Warrenne, earl of Surrey for the life of Ralph, rendering therefor to the same earl £40 yearly which exceeds the true value of the same manor.

And they say that the capital messuage of the same manor with the pasturage of the garden and with the fruits of the same are worth yearly 6*s.* 8*d.*, and 144 acres of arable land which are worth yearly 48*s.* at 4*d.* per acre, and 30 acres of meadow which are worth yearly 60*s.*, and 8 acres of pasture in le merchs which are worth by the year 8*s.*, and one pasture called Weybrokesmed and le Ruschemede which is worth by the year 6*s.* 8*d.*; and one pasture in le Estmed which is worth by the year 13*s.* 4*d.*, and 25 acres of beech wood which lies in common whereof the pannage is worth yearly when it shall happen 2*s.* and of rent as well free as customary £8 17*s.* 7¾*d.* (*sic*) to wit, at the feast of the Annunciation of the blessed Mary £4 0*s.* 7¾*d.* and at the feast of St. Michael £4 17*s.* 4*d.* and there is there a certain fulling mill with a certain pond which renders yearly 50*s.* of which [is paid] at the feast of St. Thomas the apostle 16*s.* 8*d.* at the feast of St. John the Baptist 16*s.* 8*d.* and at the feast of St. Michael 16*s.* 8*d.*, and there are there customary works which are worth yearly £6 10*s.* 2¼*d.*, and there is there one capon of rent which is worth yearly 2*d.*, and there are there 3 cocks and 3 hens at the feast of St. Michael which are worth 6*d.* and there are there, 4 geese of rent at the feast of St. Michael which are worth 2*s.* 11*d.* at 2½*d.* per goose, and there are there 123½ eggs which are worth yearly 6¼*d.* to wit, 20 for 1*d.* And there are there pleas and perquisites of court which are worth yearly 6*s.* 8*d.*

And they say that John son of the said Ralph is next heir of Ralph, and was of the age of one year at the Feast of the Purification last past.

Chancery Inquisition post mortem, Edw. II, File 98, No. 1.

THE WOOL TRADE

The valuation of "a certain fulling mill with a certain pond," which is now the water-mill on the Marlow Road, furnishes eloquent evidence that one thriving local business was the wool trade. The mill is an early example of its kind, because in 1326 the process of pressing and bleaching cloth by water-power had only recently been introduced into this country. Fullers' earth was procured from clay-pits at Woburn Sands and Apsley Guise, which had been worked from time immemorial. Not many months before the above inquisition was made, permission had been granted for Hugh le Despenser to hold a yearly fair at Hambleden and at Marlow. Subsequent documents refer to the latter as Marlow Wool Fair. In this district, as in the neighbourhood of most Cistercian abbeys, wool was the principal production, and the monks were the great sheep farmers.

10th June 1325.
Whereas Hugh le Despencer, son of Hugh Earl of Winchester, has a yearly fair at his manor of Chepyng Marlow on Wed. in Whitweek, and another at Hameldon on the feast of St. Barthw: the king grants him and his heirs that they may keep these fairs for 3 days each, viz. the above days and the 2 days following in each case.

Cal. Charter R. 1300–26, p. 477.

STEWARDSHIP OF THE CHILTERN HUNDREDS

The visitation of the Black Death in 1349, which laid waste the country-side, paralysed all industry, and swept away more than half the population of England, heralded the collapse of the feudal system. The first struggle began between capital and labour, the spirit of unrest had taken possession of the country, and the closing years of the fourteenth century were days which threatened the very foundation of the State.

The Stewardship of the Chiltern Hundreds, including Stoke, Desborough, and Burnham, had its origin in the appointment of two knights or wardens to act on behalf of the King for the protection of his subjects dwelling in or travelling through these parts. The office was at that time no sinecure as it is to-day. The very necessity for it implies most eloquently the wildness, violence, and lawlessness of this unreclaimed part of the country during the Middle Ages. The wandering labourer turned easily into the "sturdy beggar," and the ne'er-do-well of all classes became free-booters who fell unawares on the lonely traveller.

> Northampton, 3 May, 1328.
> Commission of oyer and terminer to John Bever, Robert de Asshele and Robert de Keleseye, on complaint by Richard son of Thomas Perceval the elder, that Walter Walder, Richard le Smyth, John de Burstowe, William de Burstowe clerk, and others, assaulted him at Medmenham co. Bucks, breaking his arms and thighs, and carried away his goods.
> *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1327–30, p. 296.

The utter lawlessness of the age was not confined to the professional bandit and thief. If a man had a claim on another for debt or a piece of land, or if some presumed right had been denied, the offended persons would gather a band of roughs, and take the law or their imaginary rights into their own hands. Manors were looted, corn was cut and threshed, and timber felled and carried off, in that process of mob violence. Even the dignitaries of the Church were not immune. On one occasion at least proceedings were issued against the Abbot of Medmenham for taking part in such a riot of justice.

Those were the days of Robin Hood, when robber bands haunted the forest glades, and men of noble birth led expeditions of outrage and plunder. With such an example it is not surprising that the lower orders readily took up the same way of life. The stewards of

the Chiltern Hundreds served their generation by erecting high gibbets in prominent places, for the punishment of sinners, and for the warning of others tempted to tread "the primrose path to the everlasting bonfire." Among such spots we find Gallows Hill, near Ellesborough, and the King's Wood at Medmenham. Similar names still survive throughout the Chilterns, but their sinister significance is lost upon the modern generation.

THE PEASANT REVOLT

The poem of William Langland, "The Complaint of Piers the Plowman," throws a flood of light on the social conditions of rural England at that time. It illustrates an age of shame and suffering such as England had never known, and it appeared in 1380 just as the smouldering fires of the Peasant Revolt were breaking into flame. Some twenty years previously the "Canterbury Tales" appeared, and the two works taken together give an unparalleled vision of this part of England towards the close of the fourteenth century.

The actual state of Medmenham at that time shows us a neglected village, with its principal houses in ruin, and the humbler dwellings of necessity in similar condition, with the mill pond broken away, and the mill apparently out of use. While money had become more common, the valuation of Medmenham had grown less. If it be true that a people may be judged by their circumstances, then no doubt we have in the early fifteenth century one of the darker periods in the history of this village. All these things are reflected in a return made 1422–61, relating to certain lands in the manor of Medmenham.

> Medmenham.
> There are there 5 ruinous and decayed messuages worth nothing beyond their expenses. There is a garden from which the fruit

and herbage is worth 6*s.* 8*d.* yearly. There are there 200 acres of arable land lying in common which are worth 50*s.* yearly at 3*d.* per acre. There are there 55 acres of meadow whereof 18 acres are worth 2*s.* 6*d.* per acre and 37 acres 3*s.* 7*d.* per acre (total) £8 18*s.* 4*d.* There is there a certain pasturage for cows containing 18 acres which is worth, over and above the customary pasture for 6 cows of the Abbot there, 40*s.* There are there 2 parcels of pasture worth 16*d.* There can be sold yearly in wood to the value of £6 ; there is there a certain fish-pond, broken away (*confractrum*) worth 6*s.* 8*d.* There is there a fishery in the Thames worth yearly 21*s.* Item rents of assize and customary works are worth yearly, over and above 16*s.* 8½*d.* payable to the hundred, £16 0*s.* 3*d.* Pleas and perquisites of court are worth over and above the fees and expenses of the steward, 6*s.* 8*d.*

Sum £37 10*s.* 11*d.*, which makes 56 marks 4*s.* 3*d.*

Rentals and Surveys, Public Record Office Roll, 33.

A new age began to dawn with the arrival of Geoffrey Pole, who established himself at Wittington, rebuilt the larger houses, and restored much of the village. He bequeathed to his second wife a new residence which he had erected near the vicarage. In many directions he proved himself a benefactor to the community. At the time of his decease Geoffrey Pole was the principal landowner within the manor. Some part of the remainder was in the possession of sundry freeholders. The rest was still held by the monks, who were beginning to experience the unpopularity of landlords in general. While they were often indolent and self-indulgent in personal discipline, careless of their religious trust, and wasteful in their estates, they were no worse than other corporate bodies which have outlived their usefulness, and within limits they certainly served their generation.

THE ALMONERS OF MEDMENHAM

During the three centuries in which Medmenham Abbey flourished there was no necessity for any system to deal with social problems, such as poverty

and unemployment, other than that afforded by the machinery of the religious houses. The monks were the almoners of the nation, and the source of their charity was the rich properties with which the abbeys and monasteries had been endowed. It is a matter of history that no sooner had the religious houses been suppressed than general distress became an acute problem in the country. The new proprietors of monastic lands had no sort of tender regard for old associations. Many people were reduced to a state of destitution, while others unable to earn a living were turned adrift on the world. A Commission was appointed in 1561 to inquire into the causes of distress, with the result that the mayor of each town, and the churchwardens of each village, were ordered to raise a fund among the inhabitants to provide for their own poor.

In those days medicine and sanitation were in their infancy. An outbreak of plague was no uncommon occurrence. The year 1543 witnessed such an epidemic in Medmenham, which was without doubt merely one of the many that have happened. At the episcopal visitation of Lincoln Diocese in the same year Sir Roger Fodergill appeared, but John Loxam and William Stroude, wardens of Medmenham Church, were absent, the reason being " they are visited with the Plague (*pestilentia*)."

THE REVOLUTION IN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

We are left without much information about the domestic affairs of Medmenham during the Puritan age and the reigns of the Stuarts. The romantic halo with which sick fancy surrounds the history of Puritan and Cavalier, finds little warrant in the actual facts. It was a period of religious anarchy, of dissolute living, and of the wildest fanaticism ; yet there were great events in those days, and much of the excitement was in the

near neighbourhood. John Hampden, the patriot, opened the Civil War in 1642 by an action at Brill in Buckinghamshire. Early in the following year Prince Rupert gained a decided success for the Royalists at the battle of Reading. He afterwards met and defeated, 18th June 1643, a party of Parliamentarian Horse on Chalgrove Field, in which fight John Hampden was mortally wounded. Prince Rupert next descended in a successful raid upon the Parliament quarters at Wycombe, where Lord Wentworth of Bradenham House was in command.

At that time Greenlands House, between Medmenham and Henley, was garrisoned for the King, with a view to controlling the traffic on the Thames between Reading and London. The river was then the principal artery of trade. In the following winter Greenlands was besieged by the Parliament forces under Major-General Brown. For six months they battered the house almost into ruins from the Berkshire side of the water, until on 11th July 1644, after many attacks and skirmishes, Colonel Hawkins surrendered the house and fort of Greenlands upon honourable terms.

The prevailing tone of this part of the country in the Parliamentary Revolution was Royalist. When the parishes were assessed for support of the Parliamentary army at the beginning of the Civil War, the response was most feeble from the hundred of Desborough. The parish of Medmenham in 1643 was rated at £12 for that purpose, but Richard Child, the collector, succeeded in gathering together only a miserable £1 8*s*.!

The use in churches of the Book of Common Prayer was in 1645 made illegal. About ten years later the "Committee for Scandalous Ministers," appointed by a Puritan Government, had the power of summoning and ejecting any incumbent on the most

slender excuse. In the Baptism Register of Medmenham at that time is a marked preference for Scriptural names, such as Enoch, Gabriel, Joanna, and Ruth.

THE LAST VESTIGE OF FEUDALISM

The military despotism of the Commonwealth paved an easy road for the Restoration of the Monarchy. One of the first acts of the new Government was a Bill of Indemnity and Oblivion for all offences of the Revolution, a measure which deprived Sir John Borlase and many others of any claim to compensation for losses by sequestration. Another important Act of the Restoration was the Abolition of Land Tenure by Knight Service, sweeping away the ancient claims of the Crown to reliefs and wardships, to purveyance and pre-emption, and leaving no relics except those honorary services which are still, at a Coronation, rendered to the King by the lords of certain manors. In lieu of these rights the King was granted £100,000 a year, which was to have been raised by an annual levy on the lands exempted from feudal charges, but which was actually provided by general taxation.

This process was facilitated by the movements which had marked the preceding centuries. The subdivision of the manor into tenant farms, as well as the emancipation of the workers, had long ago commuted labour service to a fixed money payment. Although wages were ridiculously low, the social order had made vast strides from the state in which a man was the bond slave of his master. At the time of the Restoration the farm labourer at Medmenham received 4*d*. a day with food, or 8*d*. a day without food. The sum of 4*s*. a week was the fair agricultural wage.

The Commonwealth dealt a death-blow to the manorial system, as between the lord of the manor and the Crown, the King being compensated by a

fixed annual grant. The dues rendered by the tenants to the lord of the manor remained in existence until the Law of Property Act (1922), which recently came into operation, abolished manorial customs, and powers of escheat. In practice, however, most of these ancient tenures were long since reduced to an annual rent. The rights to exact heriots, quit-rents, fines and reliefs, have been permitted a further ten years' lease of life, but in Medmenham they quietly disappeared last century. A quit-rent of 20 pence a year for the Church Cottages, Medmenham, was regularly paid by the wardens until about sixty years ago.

THE GREAT PLAGUE

One strange thing is that no trace survives in the parish records of the Great Plague of 1665. This omission is due more likely to defective registration than to any lucky escape. Fifty people died of the common sickness that year in Marlow. It can hardly be the case that Medmenham escaped a visitation so near at hand. This plague, after the fashion of the Black Death of 1348, spread rapidly from London up the Thames Valley, being carried from place to place by the traffic along the river, which was then the main avenue of communication with the country.

FAMOUS FROSTS

The year 1683–4 witnessed one of the most severe frosts in this neighbourhood. Beeches and oaks in the woods were split with the cold; nearly all the birds perished; the Thames was covered from December to February with ice eleven inches thick; and the traffic of the country was paralysed. Fairs were held at many places on the river. Coaches also plied along the frozen surface as on dry land. Much the same condition prevailed again during the arctic winters of 1709, 1716, 1740, and 1766.

THE RELIEF OF POVERTY

When we come to the written records of the seventeenth century we are on no uncertain ground concerning the life of the village. Much of what we find there is due to the disturbing effect of a series of expensive wars, but since the days of paganism there has probably been no age more inclined than the eighteenth century to grossness, immorality, and irreligion, no time when poverty was more acute, and no period when the conditions of life seem so sordid and degraded. Fidelity and chastity were out of fashion when, within a few hundred yards of the church, the Hell Fire Club flourished. People were left almost destitute of moral and religious teaching, except through such private benefactions as the Borlase Charity at Marlow. The peasantry were reduced to pauperism by the increasing abuse of the Poor Law. A long look back fails altogether to discover those "good old days" of which our grandfathers were always singing.

In the chest of Medmenham Church are three volumes remaining of the accounts of the churchwardens and overseers of Medmenham (1693–1733, 1773–1801, 1814–43), recording their disbursements under the Poor Law Act of 1601. Other earlier and intermediate records are missing. The following comparative statement of expenditure at five or ten years' intervals shows the rise and fall of annual disbursements "for ye poor of ye parish of Medmenham" until well into the nineteenth century:

	£	s.	d.
1693	21	2	1
1700	17	10	4
1710	27	10	3
1720	16	6	3
1730	60	17	10

Interval of no records.

	£	s.	d.
1775	115	14	3
1780	165	12	11
1790	149	1	6
1800	267	18	10
1815	494	8	9
1818	511	4	3
1820	443	15	4
1825	296	1	4
1830	204	7	0
1835	242	9	8
1840	280	2	8

In reckoning the current equivalent of this expenditure, it should be remembered that the average labourer's wage of this district late in the eighteenth century was eightpence a day; thus in the churchwardens' accounts we find:

1797. Paid Thomas Corbey one day's work . . . 8*d.*

A series of increases followed in the nineteenth century, as living became more expensive, but within the experience of the present generation agricultural wages stood for a long time at two shillings a day.

There are entries in the overseers' books reminding later generations of the stirring victories of Blenheim (1704) and Oudenarde (1708), of peace followed by industrial unrest, of desperate relief works during times of agricultural depression, of the lack of adequate hospital accommodation, as well as of money-raising expedients and obsolete laws:

1708.	To expenses at 3 severall times with ye constabell at Wiccomb to make return of ye warrants for raysing souldiers . .	3*s.* 0*d.*
1709.	Paid to ye collector of ye window tax .	1*s.* 6*d.*
1716.	Gave a souldier	6*d.*
1718.	For expenses to ye woman who lay in at Brockmore	£1 2*s.* 6*d.*
1724.	Paid to a woman in travail . . .	4*s.* 6*d.*
1726.	Maintaining a vagrant before passed away.	3*s.* 6*d*

A careful scrutiny of the expenditure of 1730 shows that fourteen Medmenham families were in receipt of parish relief, which included not only money grants of one or two shillings a week, but such items as "a pair of breeches for Norcot, 2*s.* 3*d.*"; "mending Norcot's clothes, 1*s.* 0*d.*"; also providing shirts, shoes, stockings, hats, and a gown for other parishioners. One Robert Winter that year was paid 2*s.* 6*d.* "for gathering the parish apples and carting to Henley," the sale of "parish apples 15*s.* 7½*d.*" appearing on the credit side of the overseers' accounts. The apples were probably gathered from the gardens of the Church Cottages.

Matters of possible interest to posterity are dismissed in a few words :

1773.	Novem.	Mary Johnson for gin and beer .	2*s.* 0*d.*
1778.	May 10.	To Robert Rockall, bit by a dog .	6*s.* 0*d.*
1796.	May 22.	For scoulding	1*s.* 0*d.*

At least five illegitimate children were being maintained by the parish in 1784, while the overseers endeavoured to arrange marriages or instituted legal proceedings. If the children of paupers were born in wedlock the father's parish was responsible for their maintenance ; but if they were illegitimate they were chargeable to the mother's parish. The negotiations of the overseers involved considerable expense, as well as Mr. Phipps' legal costs.

1785.	March.	Paid Mr. Phipps' Bill . .	£5 7*s.* 8*d.*
1790.	Jan. to March.	Paid Mr. Phipps' Bill .	£21 19*s.* 3*d.*

The latter charges were over a dispute with Hurley about "the removal of Thomas Nibbs and Athaliah his wife," due to "the parish of Medmenham having very hastily and incautiously removed the pauper without considering the ensuing Sessions in Bucks." But, alas ! for the overseers, the race is not won by the

hasty, neither is the battle decided by the incautious. It was settled on appeal that the order of removal be quashed.

THE DUTY OF OVERSEERS

The official appointment of overseers was affirmed in a wordy document which must have seemed appalling to rural officials, many of whom could not read. Their proceedings were written by the parish clerk, for an item of 3*s.* a year on that account constantly occurs. A warrant appointing Thomas Askham and William Fisher overseers for 1781 survives in the church chest. An extract is given below concerning people in receipt of poor relief :

> Every such Person whose Name shall be registered, together with his wife and children cohabiting in the same House (such Child only excepted as shall be by you permitted to live at home to attend an impotent Parent) must wear upon the Shoulder of the right Sleeve of his or her uppermost Garment, such Badge as is herein after mentioned (that is to say) a large Roman P with the first letter of the Name of your Parish . . . cut in red or blue cloth ; and if you relieve any such poor Persons who shall not at all times wear such Badges as aforesaid, you forfeit Twenty Shillings for every such offence.

In this order is found the idea of Nathaniel Hawthorne's novel, " The Scarlet Letter."

The Vestry Meetings of those days took place weekly or monthly in church, the parson presiding, and to this gathering was entrusted the distribution of poor relief. There was no dim religious atmosphere about the proceedings. They were not strict and formal in their procedure. The meetings were merry gatherings, in which matters of ecclesiastical moment or civil concern were mingled with exhortations to " pass the jug." The item " Pd. to John Sawyer for beer at the Easter Meeting 5*s.* 0*d.*" occurs with most commendable regularity in the churchwardens' accounts

from 1748 onwards, except that the name changes in course of time to Thomas Osborn. The entry continues until 1795, when "the old order changeth, giving place to new," and thenceforth it became the duty of the overseers to provide liquid refreshment at the Easter Vestry :

1799. Paid for liquor at Easter Meeting . . 14*s.* 0*d.*

The foaming tankard gave place later on to a more substantial Easter banquet for the churchwardens and overseers :

		£	*s.*	*d.*
1826.	March 26. Mr. Osborn dressing the dinner	1	5	0
	Mr. Hall for meat, as per bill . . .		16	6½
	Mr. Johnson for spirits		7	6

SEVERE WINTERS AND FAMINE

The year 1775–6 brought another most severe winter. A heavy frost began 7th January and lasted until 2nd February. Snow fell for twelve days, and strong north-east winds piled it into deep drifts ; there was no news from Henley or Reading for ten days ; the stage-coaches, even on the best roads, were stopped from ten to twelve days. After the snow came intense frost, the Thames being frozen over. When two loads of goods at last came through by road from London to Reading, the wagons were drawn by sixteen and fourteen horses. Two hundred and seventeen men were employed cutting a passage through the snow for carriages between Nettlebed and Benson on the turnpike road from Henley-on-Thames to Oxford. Ice on the ponds was nine inches thick. The beer and ale froze as it was drawn from the cask. A gentle thaw began early in February, but the road to Reading remained impassable until 15th February, when lanes were shovelled through the drifts.

The last twenty years of the eighteenth century

included two bad harvests, which brought serious famine everywhere in the country. There was revolution in France, and in England sedition, angry meetings, and riots. Relief works were started in Medmenham to deal with the distress. The labour of the unemployed was utilised to mend the roads. During the famine bread was distributed by the overseers. The latter certainly made brave efforts to solve the unemployment problem, by providing the means for apprenticing children to some useful and remunerative calling, as for example :

		£	s.	d.
1797.	March 2. To Mr. Mathews for apprenticing of Jane Ogbourn for two years .	10	0	0
1806.	Aug. 15. To Daniel Treacher for apprenticing Thomas Hedgerley for two years .	10	0	0

During the same period there seems to have been a general inoculation of all the inhabitants :

1788. Easter. Dr. Cleobury's bill for inoculating £6 9*s*. 3*d*.

There are the occasional tragedies of village life, with no words to explain how they happened :

1789. June 5. Edw. Ogburn relief, being wounded by a fall of chalk pit . . . . 3*s*. 0*d*.

The relief to Edward Ogburn soon established itself into a pension of five shillings a week, then afterwards into relief for his wife and children, also " 3 gowns and shoes," as well as house rent paid.

The beginning of 1795 witnessed another severe winter, with the thermometer down to 8° F., and intense cold all January. At that time the people were sadly alarmed about firing, as the coals at Reading and Henley were all gone, and vessels could not get up with more. A thaw began on 8th February, with mist and rain, so rapid that the Thames Valley was soon flooded. Within ten days, before the waters

YEW TREE COTTAGE

THE cottage known as Yew Tree has never unburdened its secret history, because the present name is modern, and on that account its descent cannot be traced in ancient documents. It was probably part of the Medmenham Abbey estate, and as such would have been included in the conveyance (pp. 193–4) to Thomas and Robert More, but its ancient and more personal associations have not yet been discovered (*see* pp. 326–7).

To face p. 305.

had abated, another severe frost set in, with heavy snow storms, the same weather continuing until the end of March. Snow had been on the ground thirteen weeks.

Scarcely a generation has passed without bringing some event of national disaster or rejoicing. The following entries refer to the illness and recovery of George III from his first attack of insanity. There were illuminations on 23rd March 1789 at Henley on the King's recovery. The houses were decorated. Fawley Court was brilliantly lighted up. There were bonfires, dinners for farmers, and barrels of ale given out in the villages. Two days were passed " quite to the satisfaction of all on so truly joyful an occasion."

1788. December 23. Form of Prayer . . . 1*s.* 6*d.*
1789. March 11. Prayer of thanksgiving . . 1*s.* 6*d.*
1789. March 23. Paid two ringing days . . 5*s.* 0*d.*

A considerable number of warrants and affidavits in the church chest deal with the settlement of "paupers and vagrants," who were either transferred home as belonging to Medmenham, or were moved away as legally domiciled elsewhere. There are instances of summary treatment to hardened sinners, each case being settled by two Justices sitting at Wycombe :

1781. April 16. Expences of a journey to take John Webb and committing him to Bridewell £1 7*s.* 0*d.*

Mary Webb and her children were at the time chargeable to the parish.

When it was decided that persons were to be transferred elsewhere, they were despatched homeward with a travelling pass, which allowed them to gather their daily sustenance as they journeyed along. This kind of entry occurs in the overseers' accounts :

Relieved a woman with a past . . . . 1*s.* 0*d.*

The unconscious humour in the last word is delightful.

The making of lace was subsidised to provide work among the women, and the proceeds went towards the overseers' funds. In the year 1796 the result was £2 18*s.* 6*d.* In 1797 the total was £2 17*s.* 6*d.*

There were fifteen regular pensioners in Medmenham in 1800, of whom William Jonson was getting £1 8*s.* a month, John Gray £1 9*s.* 6*d.*, and Samuel Bitmead £1. Besides these were a number of indiscriminate temporary payments, as well as additional allowances. In October alone that year over £13 was paid for clothing, shoes and stockings, "for the poore."

About that time the overseers felt themselves moved to express their sentiments in an address of congratulation to the village magnates. No one could have complained about the cost:

1799. Jan. 13. To Messrs Smart and Cowslade for printing the thanks of the parish to R. Scott and W. Lee Antonie Esq. . . . . 5*s.* 2*d.*

THE COST OF WAR

The war with France (1792–1815) and America (1812–14) brought wealth to the landowners and farmers, but famine and death to the poor. The price of food mounted higher and higher, because corn from the Continent and America was cut off. Scarcity of food was followed by pauperisation of the labouring classes. The first census of Medmenham, made in 1798, was to ascertain the number of able-bodied men, mills, horses, carts and other material, available for military service in the event of a French invasion. These returns were gathered from each parish in every county. Recruits were pressed into the Army, and in many cases their dependents were left destitute. A number of entries in the overseers' book illustrate

the measures adopted to provide substitutes for military service :

		£	s.	d.
1796.	March 25. Paid to Frith wife and two children 7 weeks, who is now serving in Militia for Henry Fulford . . .	1	11	6
1797.	Feb. 27. To fix a substitute for John Nibbs £9 9*s.* 0*d.* and liquor 2*s.* 0*d.* Rubings 2*s.* 6*d.*	9	13	6
	To a substitute for Wm. Collings . .	7	7	0
	To a dinner and liquor 2*s.* 0*d.* Rubings 2*s.* 6*d.*		4	6
1797.	Apr. 17. Relief to Robt. Simmons wife when serving in the Militia . . .		7	0
1799.	Jan. 17. Paid to Geo. Butler a substitute for Benjamin Chamberlin . . .	14	16	6
1800.	Paid to Marlow parish for militia men's familys as per bills	20	12	0

These charges on the parish to provide substitutes for the Army would probably have been justified on the ground that by keeping men at home the overseers were relieved of possible payments in respect of their families. They were assisted in their object by a club, which was started to pool efforts for providing military substitutes. On the credit side of the overseers' accounts this item appears :

1796. Dec. 26. Recd. of 25 men as a Club for substitutes for the militia . . . . £6 5*s.* 0*d.*

An Act of 1796 gave magistrates power to fix rates of wages in their districts to meet the extra cost of living, and whatever additional amount the employer declined to pay was to be made good by the parish. Within fifteen years the poor-rate of Medmenham was doubled, largely by the payment of such charges, e.g. :

1815. Mar. 24. Mr. Townsend for Richard Dean 28 weeks @ 3*s.* 0*d.* per week . . . £4 4*s.* 0*d.*

These disbursements were described as " casualty pensions," and they sometimes represented over £30 a month. Poor relief in Medmenham in 1818 amounted to £511, which averaged nearly £10 per household. Some desperate remedy seemed called for to terminate the process of pauperisation, and to restore the independence of the worker. Agricultural wages were then left to settle themselves on an economic basis. Extensive cuts were made in parish expenditure. The overseers determined to make a clean sweep of all clothing allowances, except for occasional poor girls going out to service, and from that time the clothing of the poor has been left to private charity. The children of the village seem in course of time to have settled into two clothing camps. In the year 1839 it is recorded :

> The dresses of Mrs. Murray's school children were changed, and these cottagers' children attended Church on Sundays in (presumed) Swiss costume, while those clad by the Vicar's wife retained their appropriate dress.
>
> *Correspondence of Joseph Townsend*, 1845.

THE NEW DAWN

The years which introduced the nineteenth century witnessed a remarkable revival of personal religion. The evangelical movement gradually won its way by the sheer force of enthusiasm. A new spirit took possession of the nation. Men awoke to a sense of national responsibility, but a great deal of misunderstanding had to be cleared away before the village saw the light of a new age.

At the same time, the disputes of overseers with neighbouring parishes continued unabated, for we meet here and there items such as these :

> 1826. Dec. 1. Paid Messrs. Nash and Rumsey as per Bill and Rect. for an appeal of the Parish of Cookham for the removal of Wm. Tower's wife . . . . . £28 7*s.* 1*d.*

1826. Dec. 1. Paid Messrs. Nash and Rumsey as per bill on account of Lord Ashbrook causing the water to be blocked up at New Lock . . . . . 18*s.* 4*d.*

In the year 1827 the following bill suggests another epidemic :

1827. Mar. 25. Mr. Hickman for vaccinating 55 persons . . . . . £6 17*s.* 6*d.*

The passing of the Reform Bill by the House of Commons in 1831, and its rejection by the House of Lords, gave rise to storms of indignation in the country. Serious riots occurred, and people began to talk gravely of a revolution. These disturbed conditions connect themselves with the following entry :

1831. To special County Rate to remunerate the suffering occasioned by a mob breaking and injuring paper machines on the Wycombe stream . . . . . £90 19*s.* 5*d.*

The year 1834 brought the new Poor Law Act into operation, ordering workhouses to be built, and that those who could not or would not keep their family should go into the workhouse, unless there was good cause for relieving them in their homes. Wages continued slowly to rise, and the moral conditions of most English villages has since been vastly improved.

After the year 1838 the overseers' book ceases to be interesting, because under the new Act money for poor-relief was paid over in a lump sum to Robert Wheeler, and from 1843 the archives of the parish church lose sight of Robert altogether.

THE COMMON LANDS OF MEDMENHAM

In most ancient townships and villages a good deal of the outlying land remained undeveloped, beyond what had been bestowed upon enfeoffed knights and their small freeholders. The barons thereupon sought

and obtained an Act of Parliament known as the Statute of Merton (1236–7), permitting any lord of a manor to enclose part of his manorial common, provided he left sufficient pasture for the freehold tenants of his manor. This enactment was strengthened and extended to exclude any claims of neighbours by the Statute of Westminster the Second (1283), and until the Law of Commons Amendment Act 1893 these two early statutes governed all controversies respecting the enclosure of manorial commons.

As the population of the country increased, so food became dearer and land increased in value. We have no precise information of the earlier enclosures which were made in Medmenham. Sir William Borlase (*c.* 1630) appropriated from the common at Wood End two closes of land amounting to twenty-five acres. The boom in farming in the great outbreak of industry which followed upon the Seven Years' War (1755–63), and the consequent rise in the value of real estate, reminded landlords of the undeveloped possibilities in waste lands. Corn, which in 1760–4 averaged 30*s.* a quarter, rose to 45*s.* during the next five years, and went on rising for many years longer. The second half of the eighteenth century also saw great developments in the farming of live stock. Vast tracts of land were appropriated in some parts of the country without any sanction beyond the will of the lord of the manor, while other areas were enclosed by statute. No less than seven hundred Private Enclosures Acts were passed by Parliament between 1760 and 1774. In Buckinghamshire 3·42 per cent. of undeveloped lands were enclosed by Acts of Parliament, and out of this amount two-thirds belonged to the eighteenth century and one-third to the nineteenth century. The commons of Medmenham, consisting of land at Wood End, with the fields south of the present Marlow Road within a line drawn from Westfield to the "Manor

House" and thence to the church, were enclosed without any Act of Parliament between 1790 and 1840, the exact year being uncertain.

THE COMMON MOOR

The Common Moor, north of the vicarage glebe, has been dedicated from time immemorial to the use of the inhabitants of Medmenham. This right was disputed in the sixteenth century, when after the escheatment of the estate of Lord Montacute, George Collingrege set up a claim that the Common Moor was not part of the manor lands, but that it had descended to him from his great-grandmother Alice, who held the pasture in her own right. The case was argued in the Court of Augmentations, where John Broksams and Thomas Hebson were summoned to represent the inhabitants, and judgment was given in the following terms against the claim of George Collingrege :

> Answer [endorsed Easter 36 Hen. VIII, 1544].
> The customary tenants and tenants at will have enjoyed rights of common over the said ground called mylle pole and commonly called the common moor from time out of mind.
> *Court of Augmentations*, Misc. Book 291, folio 61–2.

The above land was leased in 1792 by the overseers to William Fisher for twenty-one years at 15*s*. a year, which was credited to the parish rates ; but after the enclosure of all other common land within the parish the use of the Common Moor was restored to the inhabitants, to enable the lord of the manor to prove affirmatively that he had left sufficient pasturage for the commoners, according to the Statutes of Merton and Westminster the Second. The Common Moor, extending to 1 ac. 3 rds. 20 p., is the property of the landowners of Medmenham jointly. Any householder in the parish is permitted to feed one beast thereupon,

but as the grazing very largely consists of thistles and tin cans, the land is for the most part abandoned to the rabbits and the rats.

VILLAGE SCHOOL

The system of national education, bringing instruction within reach of every child, started with very small beginnings. The parish clerk was the forerunner of the modern schoolmaster, for to him fell the duty of conducting the village school, where the boys were trained to sing the services, at the same time assimilating such general knowledge as the limitations of the teacher permitted. In *Magna Britannia* (1721) among a list of charity schools of this county, Medmenham is named as possessing a school where five children were taught. One of the Duffield letters (1741) refers to a local academy conducted by Mr. Birch, which title may have been a professional term rather than a family name.

Through the interest of Dr. John Lee, at that time lord of the manor of Medmenham, a school was built in the chalk-pit for the village. It was opened in 1825 with a feast of beer and buns for the children. Ten years later its principal use was as a Sunday school, for on 5th January 1836 " the annual meeting of the friends and subscribers to the Sunday School " was held, and the Treasurer reported " a balance in hand £9."

About that time secular education began to press for more general recognition, so in 1839 a Committee of the Privy Council was created for educational purposes. A day school on more vigorous lines was then started at Medmenham, under a woman who rejoiced in the name of Mrs. Birch, her remuneration of 6*s*. a week being paid by the Vicar out of a church-rate. The village school has fluctuated in numbers considerably since that time. In 1861 there were about

forty children at the school. The numbers in 1878 had fallen to twenty-six. Twenty years later the school numbered nearly fifty children. Since then the attendance has varied up to a maximum of eighty-one. At present the average is just over fifty scholars.

A small school, supported by the private benefactions of the Scott-Murray family, also existed in Danesfield Park, near Medmenham Gate. It was founded about 1845 by Charles Robert Scott-Murray. Over the school entrance was a handsome porcelain-enamelled terra-cotta panel, representing the Virgin and Child. While Danesfield was held by the Scott-Murray family this school was staffed by the Sisters of St. Paul, and children were offered a tempting inducement to attend there by way of free clothing, but it was never a flourishing concern. In the height of its prosperity the school never numbered more than fifteen to twenty children. The building remained standing until 1900, when accommodation was made for all the village children in a new school, and the building at Medmenham Gate was pulled down.

The Education Act of 1870 provided for the establishment of School Boards in every district, and for their support out of local rates. For more than thirty years after that time the village school struggled along in its old inadequate quarters in the chalk-pit, until in 1900 new school buildings and a school-house were presented to the parish by Mr. Robert Hudson, from designs prepared by Mr. Romaine Walker, F.R.I.B.A. It is one of the few examples of a chalk-built school. On the panel in the south front the following inscription appears :

MEDMENHAM SCHOOLS.

Train up a CHILD in the way HE should go : and when HE is old, HE will not depart from it.

PROVERBS XXII.

> And They that be wise shall shine as the Brightness of the Firmament. And They that turn many to Righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever.
>
> DANIEL xii.

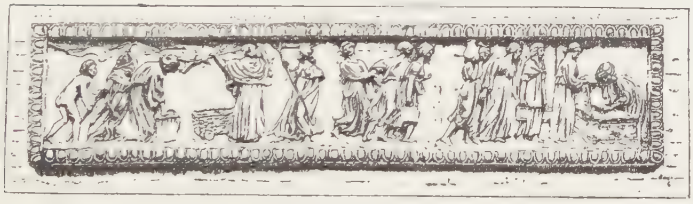
A.D. 1899.

The old school in the chalk-pit, which has been the *alma mater* of older generations, has in recent years been restored, and is now used as a Sunday school and recreation-room, together with the adjacent cottage. The latter was granted to the village by the Rt. Hon. Viscount Devonport in 1921 at a peppercorn rent. There is a sanctity about any roof which has sheltered the tender growth of knowledge, and places of sound learning deserve something of the reverence we bestow upon sacred buildings. Another generation may convert the surrounding wilderness of the chalk-pit into a garden of roses, and so symbolise to the outward eye what education has there accomplished for the mind of man.

MEDMENHAM POTTERY

A number of attempts have been made in village life either to re-establish ancient industries which had been allowed to disappear, or to create new forms of rural enterprise. Among the latter must be included the manufacture of art pottery described as Medmenham ware. The business was opened in 1897, and was financed by Mr. Robert Hudson of Danesfield, but the actual work was carried on at Marlow Common, outside the parish of Medmenham. The grinding and mixing of colours and the fixing process were done under the supervision of Karl Dresler, an expert from Dresden, but the bulk of the work employed local labour. As long as it lasted the kilns produced pottery of high standard and artistic merit. Unfortunately the venture never thrived as a commercial

proposition. After a lifetime of less than ten years it came to an end. The larger pieces of ware consisted of such things as sundials and architectural decorations. The smaller goods were domestic pottery and ornamental glazed tiles, which were sent to be sold at a depôt in London. The best local examples of Medmenham ware may be seen in friezes at Monk's Corner, Marlow Common. Other specimens will be found over the doorways of cottages at Westfield, Medmenham, as well as in ornaments occasionally seen in the houses of the neighbourhood.



A COLOURED TILE FRIEZE AT MONK'S CORNER, MARLOW COMMON.
SUBJECT: INDUSTRY

CHAPTER X

ANCIENT HOUSES, OLD FAMILIES, CHARITIES AND WILLS

"All houses wherein men have lived and died
Are haunted houses. Through the open doors
The harmless phantoms on their errands glide,
With feet that make no sound upon the floors."

Haunted Houses

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW (1807–82)

CHAPTER X

ANCIENT HOUSES, OLD FAMILIES, CHARITIES AND WILLS

THE history of the principal houses in Medmenham has been traced largely through the fortunes or adversities of their owners or inhabitants. These are the incidents which light up a village story. A dreary recital of archæological details has no attraction whatever for the ordinary individual, but to look back into the lives of those who have helped to build up our inherited traditions is a study of enthralling interest. It is a subject of which we can never learn enough, because this nation has become what it is, not through the complicated political abstractions which are the main theme of history books, but by influences which have had their origin in the country homes of England. Some notes in this present chapter on the more ancient among the smaller houses of Medmenham will therefore not be out of place.

STATES

The barns, stables, and dovecots of the manor of Medmenham were situated north of the manor house. The actual buildings have been repeatedly reconstructed. They were the premises of the estate, where tenants paid their dues, where tithes were measured out, and where the business of the manor was conducted. Some part of the existing house is of early sixteenth-century workmanship. At that time Henry, Lord Montacute, possessed the manor. When the manor of Medmenham was granted in 1552 to

Sir Thomas Palmer, the " farm of the site of the manor there with all appurtenances " was in the occupation of Thomas More, who held the lease of it, rendering for the same £15 0*s.* 8*d.* a year. He had also acted as bailiff of the manor, for which he received five marks a year, equivalent to £3 6*s.* 8*d.* The house was almost entirely rebuilt about 1850 by Charles Robert Scott-Murray. The designation of the place long ago became abbreviated to States. One of the barns still survives as the reminder of a period when every considerable estate possessed several such buildings. In the Middle Ages the manor farms were the granaries and store-houses of the nation.

After the manor house of the de Bolebec family and their successors fell into ruin and the lands were dispersed among tenant farmers, States lost its pre-eminence as the manor farm, and it then became what it continued to be until nearly the close of the nineteenth century, just one of several farms in an agricultural parish. It was purchased in 1895 by Mr. Hudson Kearley, M.P., from the late Charles Aloysius Scott-Murray. The house had then for some generations been in the occupation of a yeoman family of the name of Hobbs. In 1898 Mr. Reginald Blomfield (now Sir Reginald Blomfield, R.A.) made additions to the east end of the house for the owner, who resided there from 1895 until he removed to Wittington. Captain Bosanquet then occupied States for a few years before he took up military service again in the South African War. Mr. Francis Meade, afterwards the tenant of States, made further extensions in 1903, on the western side of the house, employing Mr. Christopher Turnor, who was practising as an architect before succeeding to the family properties in Lincolnshire. Major-General the Hon. Sir Reginald Talbot, K.B., succeeded Mr. Meade as tenant, and in his turn carried out further improvements. Thus the farm-

STATES

As a place of residence States is probably of Saxon origin. It seems to have been the home farm of the ancient lordship. Some part of the existing structure is of sixteenth-century workmanship, but the house was almost entirely rebuilt about 1850. In more recent years it was improved and extended by Mr. Hudson Kearley, M.P., afterwards Viscount Devonport. States is now in the occupation of Major-General the Hon. Sir Reginald Talbot, K.B.

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house of 1895 has grown into a residence of some dignity.

THE MANOR MILL

Two prominent features of any manor were the home farm and the mill. To the manor mill tenants brought their corn to be ground, for which service most owners exacted a liberal commission. These things were part of the manor privilege and custom, as well as one source of income, in days when rent was paid in the produce of industry, or was compounded for by feudal service. The mill of the manor of Medmenham stood at a weir on the Thames, and was known as Frogg Mill, but all traces of the mill and the weir have long ago disappeared.

The mill, which still survives near the Marlow Road, stood within the manor demesne, but this was in old time a fulling mill driven by water-power provided by the spring which supplied the village. The brook which ran away from the mill through Wittington was formerly known as "Bulbank's Ditch." In its later history, and within living memory, corn grinding was carried on at the village water mill, serving the convenience of neighbouring farmers, also providing a living for the Lowe family, which for some generations followed the occupation of millers.

LODGE FARM

Lodge farm, standing on a hill about 170 yards north of the church, is one of the most striking features of the village. The name and situation of the house have led some people to suppose that it was the lodge of Bockmer House, and that a drive connecting the two ran over the hill in a line parallel with Bockmer Lane. Without doubt the name of Lodge Farm is far older then the present house. The main approach to the farm for centuries had been

by the rough track branching off the Bockmer Lane just below the turning leading to States, where was also the entrance to the manor house. Somewhere near this corner stood the manor lodge, and nothing would seem more natural than that the neighbourhood of the lodge should have suggested the designation of the adjacent farm.

The walls of the present building are of flint rubble, with brick quoins and dressings, and the roofs are tiled. It was built by Sir John Borlase in the middle of the seventeenth century, and is of two stories, with an attic and basement. The eastern annexe of the house, built at a lower level, appears to have been a subsequent addition. The gables have moulded brick copings and kneelers. At the west end of the wall is a stone sundial. Mr. Augustus Welby Pugin, an eminent architect of the nineteenth century, considered Lodge Farm a very remarkable specimen of rubble and brick building. The parlour was formerly lined with wainscot, but during the ownership of Mr. Scott-Murray the original panelling was removed, and was replaced with matchboards. Lodge Farm formed part of the manor in Domesday Book, and continuously went with the manor lands down the centuries until 1895, when this farm was acquired by Mr. Hudson Kearley, M.P., now the Right Hon. Viscount Devonport. Like a watch tower the rugged house dominates the village below, and it is not surprising that tradition has connected the place with legends of love and wonder.

The dark periods of history have always been the ages of mystery. Even in more enlightened times the glamour of romance has encouraged many fictions. One of the most remarkable of these is the association of Nell Gwyn with Lodge Farm, so that many people to-day speak of the place as Nell Gwyn's house. Once such a rumour is started it quickly becomes established history, until some rude dispeller of dreams tracks the

tradition to its lair, and discovers that it has practically nothing to support it. Tradition has connected the name of Nell Gwyn with a number of houses, both in London and in the country, but most of them are not corroborated by any evidence. Among these are Sandford House, Chelsea ; Lauderdale House, Highgate, now included in Waterloo Park ; a house at Mill Hill ; another at Leyton ; as well as an old mansion now pulled down at Sunninghill, Berks, where an avenue of limes is still called Nell Gwyn's avenue. With the exception of her birthplace at Hereford, and her mother's home in Pimlico, there appear to be only two houses with any shadow of claim to have been the residence of Nell Gwyn. One of these occupied the present site of No. 79 Pall Mall, which overlooks St. James's Park, and the other was Burford House, Windsor, where now stands the Queen's Mews. The Windsor residence was granted by Charles II to Nell Gwyn for life " with remainder to the Earl of Burford our natural son." The story connecting Nell Gwyn with Medmenham, and particularly with Lodge Farm, no doubt grew out of her visit with Charles II to call on Sir John Borlase, Bart., at Bockmer, about which we have written elsewhere.

THE VICARAGE

The vicarage is a building of interest from its associations, rather than from any architectural merit it may possess. It is probably the oldest place of continuous residence within the manor. For more than a thousand years it has been the home of the village priest. The first parsonage was no doubt of wattle and daub, after the custom of the age, unambitious in design, and modest in extent, where the parson farmed his glebe, and struggled to make ends meet. No records exist showing the various stages of

development through which the building passed, nor is it known how often the house has been restored or reconstructed. This much is certain, that when James Harrison appeared in 1716 as vicar of Medmenham the house as it then existed was considered unfit for habitation.

During the years 1717–20 the vicarage was rebuilt, or at least partly rebuilt. The house as it subsequently appeared was of two bays, each with two floors and attics. The walls are of flint rubble, and the roofs are tiled. An east wing, including the kitchen and an upstairs room with an oriel window, was added about 1860 by Frederick Harris, who also cut a tunnel through the solid brickwork leading to what is now the main entrance. The west door was then bricked up, and the old porch became an annexe to the library. Another addition to the same room was also formed by incorporating a small extension which had once been a larder. A conservatory along the south wall of the house was converted into an extension of the ground floor while Staunton Batty was vicar of Medmenham. The conservatory in the western bay was abolished in 1915, when that side was reconverted into two rooms, and the north window of the library was enlarged in 1920. It is a house in which almost every successive incumbent has left some trace of his individuality.

THE MANOR HOUSE

The present " Manor House," south of the church, on the west side of the road leading to the ferry, was built in the reign of Henry VI by Geoffrey Pole, of Wittington. For centuries the north side of the house fronted on to the old Marlow Road. The walls are timber-framed, with brick and plaster filling, and they are on brick foundations. The roofs are tiled. The original plan was H-shaped, after the style of many

Tudor houses, with a hall in the central block, and the kitchen quarters in the north wing. It was then known as the Rood House, probably from the fact that a rood was also H-shaped. By his last testament Geoffrey Pole bequeathed to his widow Bona for her life the dwelling-house (*mansio*) situate near the abbey of Medmenham. The property continued to be part of the manor estate until 1584, when William Rice sold the house to James Duffield, who had acquired the abbey lands. His son Francis Duffield renamed the Rood House, and it then became known as the Priory.

After Francis Duffield had restored Medmenham Abbey the family made their home there, and the Priory became a dower house. About the year 1640 considerable alterations were effected at the Priory by Knightly Duffield. A new floor was inserted in the hall, and the entrance and porch at the south end of the hall were added. The peaceful flow of events then continued unbroken until 1755, when Medmenham Abbey was leased to Sir Francis Dashwood, and the Duffield family transferred themselves to their former home opposite the vicarage. About that time also the Priory was renamed the White House. Several traces of this occupation were found when the house was restored early in the present century. Towards the close of the eighteenth century all the Duffield estate passed into the hands of Dr. John Morton, and afterwards into the possession of Robert Scott, of Danesfield. The White House was then divided into four tenements. In a portion of it the first village post-office was established. The house was purchased in 1895 by Mr. Hudson Kearley, M.P., who reconverted it with much skill into a single dwelling-house, when it was also restored and enlarged. The open timber roof remains, in which the one truss visible has curved chamfered beams, forming a two-centred arch.

MEDMENHAM HOUSE

This residence was originally a shooting lodge erected on the edge of Gillman's Wood by William Lee Antonie, whose trustees had acquired the manor of Medmenham. It was built in the eighteenth century, some few years after the new turnpike road north of the house was completed. The premises consisted of a house and stable, with a garden and orchard extending down to the vicarage. When Dr. Lee severed his connection with Medmenham he sold the lands and woods, but not the house. The latter was occupied for a time by James Sawyer, but after some years it was purchased by Charles Robert Scott-Murray. Sharing the fate of other such houses in the village it was then divided into three small dwellings. When the property was purchased in 1895 by Mr. Hudson Kearley, M.P., he pulled down the old house and erected the present villa, naming it Medmenham House.

YEW TREE COTTAGE

This old house, south of the church, and on the west side of Ferry Lane, was built early in the fifteenth century. The walls are timber framed, with brick and plaster filling, and they are on brick foundations. The roofs are tiled, and are overgrown with ivy. Its early inhabitants are unknown. A family may live in a village for generations, and they may leave not the least hint of what house they occupied. It is often only by the examination of wills, conveyances, and other legal litter, or sometimes by a process of elimination, that more local facts concerning their habitation can be ascertained. In the year 1840 this house, which belonged to a family named Richardson, had been divided into three cottages, and three branches of the family owned the several parts. Moses and Edward Richardson lived in two of the cottages, and

the third, which was the portion of Hannah Richardson, was let to Joseph Collier. Charles Robert Scott-Murray afterwards absorbed the property. When the estate was dispersed, two of the dwellings passed to Mr. Hudson Kearley, M.P. The third was retained for some years by Mr. Hossack; then in 1919 he sold it to Sir Alfred Davies, K.B.E., C.B., who has greatly improved the cottage and enhanced its artistic features.

ROSE COTTAGE

This house, standing next to the vicarage on the east of Ferry Lane, was built about 1810. Although it possesses no architectural merit, the place has had interesting associations. We know nothing about its occupation until 1842, when it was opened as an "off-licence" beer-shop. It was then the property of Richard Gibbons, brewer, of Marlow. When Thomas Powys resigned the vicarage in 1852 he went to live at the Rosary, and there in 1873 he died. The next tenant was William Caslon, of a well-known type-founding business. In the probate of his will he is described as of the Rosary, Medmenham. The house then became for about ten years an annexe to the vicarage, and was used by Walter Hill for sleeping his private pupils. Mrs. Maunder afterwards rented Rose Cottage, and lived there until she built Thatched Cottage, near Hambleden Weir. During all those years it was an old-fashioned villa with well-kept gardens and a vinery. When the house was acquired by Mr. Hudson Kearley, M.P., it was for a while in the occupation of Mrs. Maunder, but after her departure it was converted into two cottages.

THE DOG AND BADGER

The Dog and Badger Inn, north of the church, is of two stories, the upper story being partly in the roof. It was built possibly late in the sixteenth

century, but the walls were almost completely refaced with modern brick by Charles Robert Scott-Murray, whose successor disposed of the inn (1895) to Wethered's Brewery, Marlow. Mr. Hudson Kearley, M.P., bought the property in 1898 from the brewers, to whom he granted a lease. The front of the house is covered with rough cast, and has three dormer windows. Some original timber framing remains at the back.

POST-OFFICE

The post-office, fifty yards north of the church, is of one story and an attic. It was built in the seventeenth century. The walls are of irregular blocks of chalk with flint rubble, except the gabled east end, which is of brick. The roof is tiled. In front the attic is lighted by three dormer windows. The situation of the house is one of the most picturesque in the village. It was purchased by Mr. Hudson Kearley, M.P., when the village was sold.

WOOD END FARM AND HOLLYWICKS

The farms at Wood End are all of them places of considerable interest. An ancient lawsuit concerning Hollywicks is one of the most instructive episodes in the early history of the manor. A diligent reader with patience can pick out here and there the tangled threads of subsequent records, and reconstruct for himself the course of events. One reward of such diligence might be that a separate story of the hill country of Medmenham would be revealed. It is a matter of slow and uncertain search through the original authorities which have been the principal quarry of the rest of this work. Investigations of that sort must have their due reward. Richard Levyng (1412) and his successors the Lewins probably lived at Wood End. Tucher Bold (1537) also possessed

interests there. Many unexplored problems in local history might find their setting or interpretation in Wood End. The lands at Wood End were part of the property which traced its descent through the Duffields and Scott-Murray family into the possession of Mr. Robert Hudson. When the estates of the latter at Medmenham were dispersed, Wood End Farm and Hollywicks were purchased by Mr. John Balkwell, who had been tenant of the lands.

One oft-repeated story says that a church once stood in Chapel Field at Wood End. So far as our investigations have proceeded nothing has been discovered to support this statement. The only ecclesiastical association of Chapel Field seems to have been in the fact that it once belonged to Medmenham Abbey. While Walter Hill was vicar of Medmenham he served a small iron church at Wood End, but it was not in Chapel Field. In the days of Rev. Stephen Winter the churchwardens of Medmenham decided to sell the building for secular purposes, and the people of Wood End now worship chiefly at Frieth or Marlow.

WOOD END HOUSE

Wood End House deserves more than passing notice, because it was built by Joseph Townsend, whose descendants were closely associated with Medmenham for many years afterwards. Joseph Townsend I was a prosperous tailor of the City of London, who retired from business and purchased an estate at Wood End from Theophilus Mountjoy Hughes and his wife Hannah, concerning whom history at present is silent. In the following transaction £120 was merely a nominal part of the purchase money :

> Final concord, Morrow of the Ascension, 11 Geo. II (1730) between Joseph Townsend plaintiff and Theophilus Mountjoy Hughes and his wife Hannah deforciant of a messuage, a

garden, an orchard, 90 acres land, 6 acres meadow, 10 acres pasture, 50 acres wood in Medmenham.
To hold to Joseph.
Warranty against the heirs of Theophilus. Joseph gave £120.
Feet of Fines (Bucks), Trinity, 11 & 12 Geo. II.

The house was originally approached by a drive, through a gate still marked private. On the north side the entrance hall was surrounded by the kitchen quarters. The living rooms looked out southwards, across well-kept lawns, through a beautiful avenue of elms, towards Wood End Farm, which also became the property of Joseph Townsend. On the west of the house was a walled garden. Succeeding generations reversed the order of things by transferring the living rooms to the north, and by converting the ornamental southern aspect into a farmyard. As a specimen of an early Georgian building, designed before the prevailing style began to degenerate into heavy outlines and solid ornament, Wood End House has considerable merit.

Joseph Townsend's successors at Wood End subsequently bought additional lands from William Lee Antonie. Nothing other than this seems to have disturbed the peaceful course of events until Joseph Townsend III arose, the stormy petrel of Wood End. He was a man of some attainment, for he served on the Tithe Commission for England. It was through a resolution of the same Joseph Townsend that the tithe commutation for Medmenham was increased from £190 to £200 a year. But he was a downright Protestant of the old school. He tilted at the Roman Catholic squire of Danesfield, at the vicar of Medmenham, and at the Archdeacon of Buckinghamshire, with such vigour and effect that he succeeded in getting a stone altar removed from Medmenham Church ; then to commemorate the victory he published his correspondence on the subject, for which

WOOD END HOUSE

(*Aed.* 1730)

THE chief interest of Wood End House lies in the fact that it was for more than 150 years the home of the Townsend family. It is just on the edge of beyond, being situated almost on the boundary of Hambleden parish, and it is the principal residence in one of the *endships* of Medmenham. The architecture is of the unmistakable Georgian period.

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thoughtfulness posterity is indebted to his memory. The great tithes of Wood End are still paid to the Townsend family, but they parted with the actual property towards the close of last century, and the house and lands after sundry changes are now held by Mr. David Longbottom, who makes his home there.

DE MEDMENHAM FAMILY

After the Norman Conquest the old English aristocracy became the new middle class. In many cases they remained as tenants of part of the lands they formerly owned, rendering service for the same to the new overlords in the accustomed manner. Something of this kind probably happened at Medmenham. The leading people in local history after the Conquest seem to have been a family who appropriated to themselves the designation de Medmenham (*see* "Lease of a Fishery," p. 371). The first documentary evidence of this family is the record in 1187 of one Richard de Medmenham, who had three sons, Ralph, Martin, and Ivo de Medmenham. The earliest land transaction in Medmenham hitherto discovered in official records is contained in the following deed, executed by the above-named Richard, who himself was son of Ralph de Medmenham:

> This is the final concord made in the court of the lord king at Westminster, on the day of St. Bridget in the year of the reign of King John the first (1 Feb. 1199–1200) before G. Fitz-Peter, William de Warenne, Richard de Herierd, Simon de Pathill, Osbert son of Hervey, John de Gestling, justices and other faithful men of the lord king there then present.
> Between Ralph son of Swein, querent, and Richard son of Ralph tenant concerning ½ hide of land with appurtenances in Medmenham, whereof there was a plea between them in the aforesaid court, to wit, that the aforesaid Ralph remitted and quitclaimed all the right and claim which he had in the aforesaid land to the aforesaid Richard and his heirs, from

himself and his heirs for ever. And for this quitclaim and fine and concord the aforesaid Richard gave the same Ralph 40*s*. sterling.

Feet of Fines (Bucks), Case 14, File 4, No. 14.

Sixty years later another descendant, William de Medmenham, is named in a document quoted elsewhere, and in 1274–5 a suit was submitted to the same William for arbitration. In the year 1268 John de Medmenham was Abbot of Chertsey. Ralph de Medmenham, son of the aforenamed William, married Joan, daughter of Robert of Hurley, and held land from the monks of Hurley. Thomas de Medmenham signed as witness to a document in 1320 at Hurley. Two years later the surviving head of the house was Isabel de Medmenham, a widow, and the owner of property in Hurley. Her husband, Ralph de Wydyndone, had died about 1319–22, when Wittington passed into the occupation of John de la Lude. Traces of the name de Medmenham have occasionally been found in other parts of the country. In such cases the surname was sometimes bestowed as a designation of place-origin, and did not of necessity imply actual relationship to a certain family.

THE LEVYNG FAMILY

Richard Levyng or Lewin, who was established at Medmenham early in the fifteenth century, and held lands in the neighbourhood, was probably a wealthy citizen retiring from business. His descendants lived for generations in Medmenham. Quite possibly he was one of the Flemish weavers invited by Edward III to settle in this country, where they rapidly developed the woollen trade and built up a wealthy industry. This connection may have first introduced Richard to Medmenham, because the monks were great wool farmers, and a fulling mill was the most flourishing local enterprise. One distinction enjoyed by the

Lewin family is that they have left their name identified with a seven-acre plantation at Wood End, in a piece of land ever since identified as Lewin's Grove. Richard Levyng died in 1412, and he is buried with Alice his wife beneath the aisle of Medmenham Church, where an ancient brass still marks their resting-place.

The last of the clan was a William Lewin, who contributed varying sums to the subsidies granted by Parliament to Henry VIII :

De Lewyn	*Pro bonis* 11*s.* 11*d.*	12 Nov. 1543
De Willelmo Lewyn	xii*d.*	1 Oct. 1545
De Willelmo Lewyn	*Pro terris* vi*s.*	20 Feb. 1546

About ten years later William Lewin died, leaving a wife and three daughters. In a will dated 11th March 1555–6 he described himself as " gentleman of Medmenham " ; he desired to be buried in Medmenham Church ; he wished his wife Margett to have " all my whole lands purchased and unpurchased," and " after her departure I will and give to my daughter Agnes Bolde and her heirs for ever my purchest lands." The rest of his lands fell equally to the three daughters, Agnes, Joane, and Margaret. The daughters all found husbands in the near neighbourhood. Agnes married a son of Tucher Bold of Harleyford and Wittington ; and Margaret became the wife of Henry Est, to whom certain fishing rights in the Thames were granted.

Sundry provisions in the will of William Lewin are deserving of passing remembrance :

> Item. I will and bequeath to the foresayd Churche of Medmenam a cowe upon this condition That I maye have a yerelye mynde perpetually.
> Item. For lying in the Church 6*s.* 8*d.*
> Item. I give to the Church of Medmenam a chalice price iij.li to be leaved of ye Woodes.

Some part of this benevolence sounds strange to a generation accustomed to think of its charities in cash terms, but gifts to the Church until modern days were commonly given in kind. The cow was no doubt intended to confer a capital obligation on posterity for remembrance at the altar once a year, but as such bequests were annulled by statute under Edward VI, and Masses for the Dead found no place in the Prayer Book of Queen Elizabeth (1559), it is doubtful if the church ever received the cow. The chalice, on which the executors were to spend something like £50 in present currency, soon disappeared. Only about eighty years later another chalice was presented to Medmenham Church by Lady Borlase.

The Charities of Medmenham

INQUISITION TAKEN AT GREAT WYCOMBE 1 MAY, 15 JAS. I (1617)

(*Begins with an Account of the Charities of Great Marlow*)

And further the said Jurors saie uppon theire Oathes that some suche of the Townsmen Parrishioners Inhabitaunts wthin the Towne and parrishe of Medmenham in the Countie of Bucks, as have ben from tyme to tyme elected and chosen Churchwardens of and for the said Towne and parrishe of Medmenham aforesaid have by all the tyme whereof the memorys of man is not to the contrarye as in the right and as belonging of and to the parrishe Churche of Medmenham aforesaid helde and enjoyed the forecropp or first vesture of one acre of meadowe comonly called or knowen by the name of the Churche acre lieing and being in the great meade wthin the parrish of Medmenham aforesaid . . . comonly called . . . Mednam Meade Extendinge yttselfe in length

Thirtene poles Eleaven foote and an hallf and in breadth all the Easte ende fower poles fower foote and Three ynches and att the west end fower pooles and Seaven foote, and lieth betwene an Acre called the Abbotts acre on the northeside and Tooe acres belonging to Chisbeche Far(m)e on the Southside and shooteth uppon the Ryver of Thamyse att the East ende uppon a furlonge called by the name of fower acres, att the west ende. And allso one Tenement or Howsse scituate in Medmenham aforesaid wth a Backside there(unto) adioyning conteynynge by estymacon one acre of land . . . and nowe being in the tenure of one Martha Cobland Wedowe and lienge betwene the Churche and Churchyarde there on the East parte, A close and moore of the (Lady of the mannor) West, the ground of John Ebson on the South and the Kings highewaie on the Northe. In whiche said Tenement or Howse last menconed the said Townsmen parrishioners and Inhabitaunts of Medmenham aforesaid and Churchwardens for the tyme being have from tyme to tyme and by all the tyme aforesaid by and wth the consent of the Lorde of the Mannor of Medmenham aforesaid for the tyme being to whom is paied twentie pence yerelie rente for the same used to place some of the most aiged poore and impotent people of the same parrishe wanting habitacon . . . (*continues with Wycombe Grammar School*). Signed : Willm Borlase and others Commissioners under the Statute of Charitable Uses.

Petty Bag. Inquisition as to Charitable Uses, Bdle. 7, No. 3.

The above inquisition refers to an ancient right of grazing the forecrop of one acre in Medmenham Mead. The tenements named in the document are now identified as the Church Cottages, Medmenham, but the detached cottage is of more modern origin. The lady of the manor would have been the widow of John Borlase II.

Medmenham Wills

This record has been compiled from those calendars which show place-names—viz. for Prerogative Court of Canterbury : Wills 1383–1629 (Index Soc.), Probate Year Books 1630–53 (ed. Matthews) ; and MSS. Calendars to wills in the Archdeaconry of Buckinghamshire 1483–1601, 1632–1685, 1709–1832. The Buckinghamshire Calendars 1601–1631 and 1686–1708 do not show the residence of the testator, therefore these years may not be complete. There are no Medmenham wills at Lambeth Palace.

COURT.	SURNAME.	CHRISTIAN NAME.	DATE.	REFERENCE.
P.C.C.	Poole	Geffrey, Esquire	1478	35, Wattys
A.B.	Colyngeryge	John	1488	1, f. 238
A.B.	Symond	Richard	1526	1523–7, f. 115
A.B.	Hobson	John	1553	1552–3, f. 148
A.B.	Strode	William	1554	1554–7, f. 49
A.B.	Lewyn	William	1555	1554–7, f. 89
A.B.	Ebson	Thomas	1570	1568–72, f. 177
A.B.	Gibbs	Roger	1572	1568–72, f. 2337 1573–79, f. 19
A.B.	Coplond	Christopher	1574	1573–79, f. 58
A.B.	Dicke	Robert	1576	O., May 1576
A.B.	Wale	John	1576	O., May 1576
P.C.C.	Rookes * of Falley, Bucks	Robert, Esquire	1580	30, Arundell
A.B.	Readinge	Robert	1585	O., Oct. 1585
A.B.	Cowper	Agnes	1587	O., Sept. 1587
P.C.C.	Rice	William, Esquire	1590	10, Leicester
A.B.	Hibberd	Maud	1592	O., Oct. 1592
P.C.C.	Todd	Henry	1593	3, Dixy
A.B.	Readinge	Beatrice	1596	O., Feb. 1596
A.B.	Anstie	Nicholas	1597	O., April 1597
P.C.C.	Jordan, of Bockmer End	John, husbandman	1606	35, Stafforde
P.C.C.	Duffeild	Francis, Esquire	1612	92, Fenner
P.C.C.	Tenner, of Bockmer End	Roger, yeoman	1615	102, Rudd
P.C.C.	Weedon	David	1617	109, Weldon

MEDMENHAM WILLS

COURT.	SURNAME.	CHRISTIAN NAME.	DATE.	REFERENCE.
P.C.C.	Cooxe	John	1621	9, Dale
P.C.C.	Brockwell	Matthew	1622	72, Saville
P.C.C.	Bray	Ralph	1623	97, Swann
P.C.C.	Burlase	Sir William, knt.	1629	95, Ridley
P.C.C.	Duffeild	Robert, gent.	1629	49, Ridley
P.C.C.	Duffeild	Robert, gent. (sentence)	1629	103, Ridley
A.B.	Plumridge	John	1632	O.
A.B.	Readyng	William	1635	1635, f. 149
A.B.	Bovington	Joan	1636	1636, f. 12
A.B.	Kye	William	1639	1639, f. 91
P.C.C.	Kye	William	1639	162, Harvey
P.C.C.	Weedon	Christopher	1639	96, Harvey
A.B.	Collins, *alias* Deane	Thomas	1641	1641, f. 23
A.B.	Duffield	Alice	1641	1641, f. 18
A.B.	Collens, *alias* Deane	Robert	1644	1644, f. 38
A.B.	Bishop	Henry	1648	1648, f. 115
P.C.C.	Bishop	Henry	1648	75, Essex
A.B.	Child	Richard	1660	O.
A.B.	Davis	Anne	1670	O.
A.B.	Moulder	John	1671	O.
A.B.	Cummin	Thomas	1673	O.
A.B.	Eeles	Elliner	1673	O.
A.B.	Redding	Robert	1674	O.
A.B.	Brookesby	Elizabeth	1769	O.
A.B.	Keene	William	1683	O.
A.B.	Hobbs	William, senior	1684	O.
A.B.	Bridon	Jeremy	1709	1709, f. 39
A.B.	Eeles	John	1718	1718, f. 19
A.B.	Adams	Edward	1725	1725, f. 110
A.B.	Adams	Rachel	1729	1729, f. 53
A.B.	Briden	Jonas	1729	1729, f. 49
A.B.	Sawyer	Francis	1750	1750, f. 26
A.B.	Taylor	Moses	1755	1755, f. 17
A.B.	Blackwell	Richard	1805	1805, No. 32
A.B.	Sawyer	Elizabeth	1808	1808, No. 30

P.C.C. Prerogative Court of Canterbury.
A.B. Archdeaconry of Bucks.
O. Original. * Mentions Medmenham.

CHAPTER XI

THE KING'S HIGHWAY

"On either side the river lie
Long fields of barley and of rye,
That clothe the wold and meet the sky ;
And thro' the field the road runs by
To many-tower'd Camelot."

The Lady of Shalott

ALFRED LORD TENNYSON (1809–92)

CHAPTER XI

THE KING'S HIGHWAY

The Story of the Road

We seldom realise that until modern days the King's Highway was no more than an abstract idea. There were no beautiful macadam roads with tidy little milestones telling us how far it is to Hatfield or to Henley. There were no strips of land bounded by fences, permanently and exclusively appropriated for transport. The King's Highway was not even a road, but merely a perpetual right of passage for the King and his subjects, over another's land from village to village, which generally followed a beaten track, but in bad weather might be diverted, even through the corn. The roads of the thirteenth century, except the Roman highways across England, were more analogous to the bridle-tracks and footpaths across the commons of to-day. They could not be compared with our modern ideas of a roadway.

THE ROAD MENDERS

The Statute of Winchester, passed in 1285, was the first attempt to recognise roads, but the provisions thereof only dealt with them so far as it was necessary to protect the public against being surprised by thieves. It was a police measure rather than a roadway act. This law required that highways leading from one market town to another should be enlarged, and that there should be no bushes, woods, or dykes, within 200 feet either side of the highway, whereby a man might lurk to do hurt. When the unholy reputation of the Chiltern Hundreds is remembered, it must have

seemed a very necessary enactment in these wild parts. The duty of carrying out this injunction fell upon the court leet of the hundred or of the manor.

The actual work of keeping roads in repair was an act of supererogation. It was regarded as a pious and meritorious work, because it was essentially true charity to unfortunate travellers and pilgrims. The care of the roads was therefore left to the clergy, to the monks, and to the religious guilds, on the ground that it was a work well pleasing to God. In the mediæval towns tolls were levied for highway repairs, and any provincial mayor could compel a property owner to maintain his frontage as far as the middle of the street; but in rural parts such matters were left to voluntary effort, until the dissolution of the monasteries and the consequent rapid decadence of many highways made it necessary to invoke legislation.

STATUTE LABOUR ON HIGHWAYS

The first attempt at general control of public roads was made in 1555, when a "Statute for Mending of Highways" enacted that "the Constables and Churchwardens of every parish shall yearly, upon the Tuesday or Wednesday in Easter week, call together a number of parishioners, and shall then elect and choose two honest persons of the parish to be surveyors and orderers for one year of the works for amendment of the highways in their parish" (2 & 3 P. & M. c. 8). The work was done by giving notice in church of four appointed days on which the people were to assemble with carts, horses, and the requisite implements for the repair of the parish roads. The parish surveyor was to direct the work. All householders, except servants hired by the year, were liable to contribute according to their means, and fines were imposed upon any who neglected the summons, as well as upon surveyors who failed in their duty. Three times a year the

surveyors had to appear before the Sessions and declare upon oath the conditions which existed in their parish, and they had furthermore the unpleasant duty of rebuking their fellow-parishioners in church for any neglect of a tiresome obligation.

The above Act was renewed and extended in 1562, when the quota of labour became six days a year. In 1575 the Statute was again amended, and thereafter surveyors became responsible officers of the parish, independent of the churchwardens. There were several subsequent revisions in details according as the earlier Acts proved insufficient for new emergencies; but generally statute labour became firmly rooted as the means for keeping parish roads in good condition, and it continued in one form or another until 1835, when a rate upon property was substituted for direct labour, and power was granted to combine parishes into districts, with a view to appointing district surveyors.

The earliest surviving records of Medmenham are wholly concerned with the administration of the Poor Law, and they make no mention of surveyors of the highways, but such officials were no doubt appointed. They do not appear in the Churchwardens' proceedings until 1749, when Gabriel Page and John Nibbs, jun., were named as surveyors of the highways.

THE TURNPIKE ROAD

The conscripted labour system had many defects. One amazing thing is that it lasted so long. The workers called themselves the King's Highwaymen, but their neighbours referred to them as the King's Loiterers. Most of their time was spent in idle chattering, and it was said that one hired labourer did as much work as six or seven conscripted men. Many inequalities existed in the system, yet it continued in vogue until the introduction of stage-coaches speeded

up the care of the roads. One of the first express coaches on the road was the Oxford Fly, which started in 1669 and ran from London through Bourne End and High Wycombe to Oxford. Other coaches also ran to Oxford along the lower road through Maidenhead, Hurley, and Henley. The introduction of stage-coaches rendered it imperative to devise new methods for maintaining the highways.

An important development took place in 1663, when the first Turnpike Act was passed, entitled " an Act for repairing the highways within the Counties of Hertford, Cambridge and Huntingdon." After reciting that the Great North Road, which ran through these counties, was in great disrepair, the preamble stated that the ordinary means appointed were not sufficient to effectually maintain the road, and that the inhabitants could not repair it without some further provision of money. It was thereupon enacted that one toll-gate should be established in each county, and at each gate one toll gatherer, whose remuneration was to be fixed by the County Justices. The rates of toll and the length of lease were named in the Act, and a surveyor in each county was required to send an annual statement of accounts to Quarter Sessions. In Cambridge and Huntingdon nothing seems to have been done, but in Hertfordshire the trust did valuable work. The opening years of the eighteenth century saw the establishment of thousands of turnpike trusts. Unpaid statute labour was still used in part to maintain those roads, but beyond what was thus demanded the surveyor of the road authority hired additional labour, which was paid from the income of the trust.

THE HATFIELD TURNPIKE TRUST

The assumption that the turnpike toll charge was a temporary expedient to restore ruined roads proved no more than an illusion. Whenever a turnpike trust

drew near the close of its lease, the authority invariably petitioned Parliament for a renewal, and the fresh lease generally included new powers and augmented tolls. The system had many defects. The areas of turnpike administration were scattered over the country. There was no national system. Such roads also were frequently constructed to meet the special interests of particular towns or wealthy landowners, to the detriment of general efficiency. Local selfishness often produced strange distortions. One remarkable illustration of a noble purpose defeated by bumbledom exists in the turnpike road which passes through Medmenham. This road was constructed about 1766 from Hatfield to Reading by the Hatfield Turnpike Trust. It was designed to open easy communication between the eastern counties and the west of England, to avoid passing through London. Had the straight line been preserved, the new cut would have saved many miles. The trustees, however, made a zigzag course by Watford, Amersham, High Wycombe, Marlow and Henley-on-Thames, spoiling their original idea, solely to meet the clamouring demands of those towns.

The ancient main road through Medmenham led across Danesfield Park almost in a straight line from Wittington farmyard to Medmenham Gate. A broken avenue of old trees still marks the route. It crossed the mill stream just west of where now stands the north Abbey lodge, skirted south of the Common Moor, and, passing close against the Vicarage and the "Manor House," proceeded direct to Westfield. The surveyor of the Hatfield Turnpike Trust condemned the section from Medmenham Gate to Westfield because it was frequently flooded. A new road was then made from Medmenham Gate to the Church ; the continuation of the same past the Church Cottages to Westfield was improved, and the old road was absorbed

into fields. About the year 1850 Charles Robert Scott-Murray made an arrangement with the Hatfield Trust by which the highway through Danesfield Park was diverted to the present line of road. There were no toll-gates in Medmenham. The first gate eastward was beyond Marlow, and westward there was a gate at Greenlands, just on the brow of the gradient.

The toll charges of the Hatfield Turnpike Trust varied from 4*d.* for a horse and carriage, down to cattle at 10*d.* a score, and sheep and hogs at 5*d.* a score; but there were certain exceptions. His Majesty's mail went free of charge, so also did persons passing to places of worship, funeral parties, wagons of soldiers on the march, and horses travelling with vagrants sent by passes. Clergymen on duty were tax-free. Traffic within the parish was likewise exempt. The income from the tolls, after deducting working expenses, went to repay capital borrowed for road improvements. At the end of twenty-one years the Act creating the Hatfield Board expired; thereupon several of the trustees on 9th February 1787 presented to the House of Commons a petition setting forth that considerable sums were still due to the promoters, and that the road could not be kept in good and sufficient repair unless the Act were continued and enlarged. In the same year the trust was re-enacted for a further twenty-one years, additional trustees were appointed, and minor changes were made in details. Parishes through which the road passed were required by the Act to continue their quota of statute labour, and to provide a team of horses for one day for every £50 value of land. As one result of these special Acts the relations between parish surveyor and turnpike surveyor became rather complicated. The parish surveyor was obliged to deliver a list of persons liable to be called upon, and he was expected to summon them to work when the turnpike surveyor gave notice of the time and place.

MEDMENHAM GATE

(Looking westward)

THE origin of the name Medmenham Gate is lost in antiquity. For centuries there has been a private road along the undercliff here to New Lock and Wittington. The old Medmenham to Marlow road once swept round in a curve just beyond the gates in the picture. It is possible that the original Medmenham Gate was situated at the point where the private road joined the ancient highway (*see* pp. 377–8).

To face p. 346.

THE FAILURE OF TURNPIKE TRUSTS

In 1822 the whole law governing turnpike trusts was consolidated into a single statute. To all appearances turnpikes had come to stay. An unexpected situation then arose. Suddenly, with very brief warning, the " calamity of railways " brought road trusts into chronic insolvency. By the middle of the century tolls hardly paid for their collection, and road bonds had become waste paper. Money was advanced by the Government to pay off creditors of the trusts, the corresponding debt being charged upon each county. At the same time, turnpikes which could make ends meet were allowed to go on as before, so the Hatfield Board bravely struggled on. Aided in each parish by subsidies from the rates, which since 1835 had taken the place of statute labour, they fought against increasing adversities. The number of turnpike trusts in other parts of the country rapidly diminished. About 1885 the last toll was levied on the Hatfield to Reading turnpike. Three years later the Local Government Act of 1888 placed upon the new County Council the burden of maintaining the disturnpiked roads, and the principal thoroughfare through Medmenham is now controlled by the same authority, the cost being still provided by a subsidy from the local rates.

THE DISTRICT ROADS

The secondary roads of the parish from Medmenham Ferry to Bockmer and Wood End are under the control of the District Council by a separate process of development. Towards the close of the eighteenth century, as poor relief became a more acute problem, there arose an increasing tendency to employ pauper labour on the roads, as is testified by the following

extracts from the records of the overseers of Medmenham :

		£	s.	d.
1782, July.	Stone picking	4	6	9
1788, Easter.	Stone picking	9	13	8
1789, April.	Expenses on the lane to Bockmore End	17	9	6
	Beer on the Surveyor's Account .	1	0	10

Although the practice had certain redeeming features as a solution for unemployment, it was found that pauper labour was as inefficient for keeping the highways in repair as it was useless for meeting the problem of poverty. Moreover, there was no adequate supervision, because the parish surveyor was generally a busy farmer. The General Highways Act of 1835 abolished the whole system, dismissing statute labour and team duty, and setting up in each parish a vestry of ratepayers as the governing body, leaving it free to raise its own revenue for maintaining the parish roads. A further Act of 1862, and a Parliamentary Report of 1864, without any attempt at compulsion, encouraged the formation of District Highway Boards, to which the care of roads should be entrusted. These olive branches did no more than arouse wrathful indignation, because they seemed to suggest the possibility of compulsory legislation. A special meeting of the vestry was called at Medmenham, at which the following solemn protest was registered :

> 1864. November 18. It was unanimously agreed by the Rate-payers present to offer every opposition to the compulsory application of the Highways Acts of 1862 and 1864, to the Parish of Medmenham.

In the whole of Buckinghamshire, as well as in most other counties, three years after the Act of 1862, not a single District Board had been formed. At the same time, the policy of grouping parishes had gone too far to be abandoned. The Public Health Act of

1872 was more definite. This statute parcelled out England and Wales, irrespective of county areas, into Highway Districts, which were finally brought to coincide with the Poor Law Unions, a scheme which consolidated Medmenham and Hambleden in Buckinghamshire with Henley-on-Thames in Oxfordshire, and this system of administration still prevails. The principal power relating to highways now left to the Parish Council is that of repairing and maintaining footpaths other than those alongside public roads.

FIELDPATHS OF MEDMENHAM

The innumerable paths across private land were apparently used by the public without restraint until the opening years of the nineteenth century. A tendency then arose to restrict the general use of such paths, mostly by barricading the way and putting up a board "No Thoroughfare!" Any question of ancient customary use was effectually extinguished by a statute of 1815, enabling unnecessary footpaths to be abolished, for which purpose a closing order by two justices was all that was needed. Twenty years afterwards this provision was modified by transferring to Quarter Sessions the power to make such an order. In that way a process of legal control began which has made it increasingly difficult to obliterate rights of way or to abolish arbitrarily any privilege which has the sanction of ancient custom. The records of the Parish Council of Medmenham give an account of all the negotiations which have arisen within recent years on the interesting question of public footpaths.

The existence of a pathway anywhere does not of necessity imply that a right of way has been established, and it is not sufficient plea to produce the testimony of the oldest inhabitant. Even the production of an ancient ordnance map is in itself of no value. There must also be evidence of express dedication,

proving that it was the intention of the landowner at some time to consent to the public use of such a footpath. It would be an impossible task to indicate all the places in Medmenham where such rights can be legally sustained. Each case must be examined on its own merits before a public way can be said to exist. Whether the given facts will be sufficient to constitute a legal claim in any particular case is a question which, in the event of any difference of opinion, would have to be decided by a proper Court of Appeal. But, roughly speaking, it may be observed that where evidence of dedication can be proved it can be claimed that a right of way exists. This evidence of dedication may be deduced from the terms of ancient documents, as in the case quoted elsewhere concerning the right of way across Medmenham Ferry, or it may be discovered in the minutes of public bodies, but, whatever evidence may be deduced, it must be possible to arrive at the conclusion that at some time or other the owner intended that the public should have free passage over his land.

The towpath on the bank of the Thames is considered to be dedicated to the public for towing boats and for that purpose only. The right to use a towpath additionally as an ordinary footway is determined by the same considerations which govern all fieldpaths, and evidence of special dedication for that purpose must be adduced before a public right of footway can be said to exist along any towpath. The Thames Conservancy pays annual rent to some of the riparian owners of towing-paths, at the rate of 2*d.* per rod.

The Story of the River

It is customary to regard the Thames as the great waterway of commerce or of pleasure, much in the sense that a main road is the highway of land transport,

but the question of ownership is very imperfectly understood. The River Thames is a statutory highway, over which legal enactments or immemorial usage have secured for the public certain established rights. In some parts of the river, such as at weirs, locks, and lock cuts, the Conservators have acquired an ownership by the Thames Navigation Act, 1866, but the bed and soil and banks of the river, including the towing paths, belong elsewhere to the riparian owners. In a similar way parcels of land purchased by the turnpike trusts to improve the highway are now public property, but, in the absence of such evidence, the ownership of the soil of the highway is vested in the owners of the land on either side. This right is subject to the public usage of the whole space between the fences.

When a riverside estate is purchased, much of the land is under water. The area of the Thames at Medmenham from New Lock to Magpie Island is 36 acres to midstream, not reckoning the islands, and it is the freehold of the adjacent land owners, subject to sundry established rights and privileges. One ancient custom is that the owners of this water area still pay tithes to the vicar of Medmenham on their riparian and commercial profits, which are now nil; and on their rights of fishery, which have become worth less than nothing.

THE THAMES CONSERVANCY

While private ownership in the Thames has been recognised from very early days, the right of conflicting claimants has been an endless source of obstruction and litigation. During the fourteenth century general jurisdiction over the river was a royal prerogative exercised through special commissions, which were constituted as necessity arose. An Act of Parliament in 1350, against obstructions in the navigable

waterways, was the first attempt at general public control of the river; but the Act was ineffective because there was no permanent body charged with administrative powers. Where there was a town on the banks, such as Oxford, some local control was exercised by the district authority, but in most places the story of the Thames became a continual three-cornered dispute. There were the owners of mills and fisheries, who derived from their weirs an easy income; there were the barge-masters, who wanted a good navigable river for next to nothing; and there were the riverside populations, who were frequently flooded out and robbed of their livelihood by millers who persisted in raising the levels of the weirs.

These abuses continued almost unchecked until an Act in 1695—6 and 7 of William III, cap. 16—was passed "to prevent exactions of the occupiers of locks and wears upon the River of Thames westward, and for ascertaining the rates of water carriage." This statute proposed that the Justices of the Peace of the riverside counties were to be commissioners for the regulation of navigation, with authority to settle rates and put down abuses; but the Act was never effectively put into operation. A series of statutes followed in the eighteenth century as the business of the river increased. Commissioners were appointed by an Act passed in 1751—24 Geo. II, cap. 8—which related to the river above Staines, and these were constituted for preventing—

> divers abuses committed by the owners of the several towing-paths and other passages on the banks of the said river(s), and by the owners of locks, weirs, turnpikes, dams, floodgates and other engines in and upon or near adjoining to the said rivers; and also by the several barge-masters and their servants navigating thereon; by reason whereof and other exactions the price of water carriage on those rivers, hath of late years been very much raised, contrary to the intent and provision of divers wholesome and good laws; made for the due regulation of the said navigation.

From that time onwards the Thames Navigation Commissioners gradually produced order out of chaos. The control of the waterway below Staines was until 1857 the jealously guarded prerogative of the City of London.

The Conservators of the River Thames were originally incorporated by the Thames Conservancy Act, 1857, and their jurisdiction (as successors of the Corporation of the City of London) then extended from Staines in the County of Middlesex to Yantlet Creek in the County of Kent. By the Thames Navigation Act, 1866, the river from Staines upwards to Cricklade (Wilts), formerly under the control of the Thames Navigation Commissioners, was added to the Conservators' jurisdiction ; and their powers were extended and enlarged by various Acts passed between 1867 and 1885. These provisions were eventually consolidated in and by the Thames Conservancy Act, 1894, which also reconstituted the Conservators into a body of thirty-eight members.

By the Port of London Act, 1908, the rights, powers and duties of the Conservators below an imaginary line about 265 yards below Teddington Lock were transferred to the Port of London Authority, but above that limit the control remained with the Conservators, who were reconstituted by the same Act into a body of twenty-eight members. The Conservators of the Thames are nominated by the County Councils of the shires bordering on the Thames valley, by certain Borough Councils of the larger towns on its banks, and by the Government and Metropolitan authorities which have interests in the river.

MEDMENHAM FERRY

In places where a monastery existed adjacent to a river there was almost invariably a ferry near at hand, which was frequently the property of the abbey. Many

such instances still survive. The ferry was maintained by the abbey for its own convenience, as well as for the use of pilgrims and others who might require the hospitality extended by the abbey to travellers. There is good legal ground for the presumption that Medmenham Ferry originated in a Royal grant or franchise, which bestows upon the owner of the ferry a right against all comers to have a boat at a specified crossing upon the river, for the conveyance of passengers and traffic from side to side, in return for an equitable toll. He may bring an action against anyone attempting to disturb his right by establishing another ferry so near at hand as to divert his custom, but his possession of a franchise also obliges him to provide proper boats, with all things necessary for efficient transport, and to maintain a regular service at all hours. One of the most important disputes concerning such rights of way arose in 1898 in the actions over Medmenham Ferry tried in the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court of Justice.

The two cases were Hudson *v.* Weyman and the Attorney-General and Kearley *v.* Hudson. The actions were taken together, and the hearing extended over three days. The counsel engaged on Mr. Hudson's side were Mr. Jelf, Q.C., Mr. McCall, Q.C., and Mr. Montague Lush. Mr. Kearley, who instituted the second action, was represented by Sir Edward Clarke, Q.C., M.P., Mr. Rawlinson, Q.C., and Mr. Daldy.

In the first action Mr. Hudson, of Danesfield, claimed an injunction to restrain the defendant, Mr. John Weyman, or his agents, from trespassing on the plaintiff's land at Medmenham Ferry, and carting bricks over the land. Damages and costs were claimed. The defendant maintained that there was a right of public highway and common over the land.

THE FERRY ACTION

The second action was brought by the Attorney-General at the instance of Mr. Hudson Kearley, M.P., as relator, against Mr. Robert Hudson, to restrain the defendant from obstructing and encroaching on the highway, and from failing to keep open the public ferry at Medmenham.

The ferry was situated at the termination of the road which passes through the village to the Thames, where foot passengers, horses, and vehicles from time immemorial had been conveyed across the river to a meadow on the opposite bank, known as the Parish Meadow, Hurley. From thence the Maidenhead to Oxford highway was reached by a well-defined road. The ferry was leased with the Ferry Hotel, and the inn-keeper received the profits. The towpath crossed the river at this point and the barge horses were in the habit of crossing by the ferry in question. Up to 1851 there had been a second ferry higher up the river, near a boat-house on the Berkshire side, by which the upstream horses crossed. The down-stream horses had always crossed at the lower ferry. The land on the Medmenham side formerly belonged to Mr. Scott-Murray, and that on the Hurley side to Sir Gilbert East. After Mr. Hudson had purchased both estates, he stopped the public use of the ferry, and obstructed the alleged highway leading to it. A decision of the Court was thereupon sought by Mr. Kearley, to declare that the ferry was public, also that the defendant should maintain it, and that he should be restrained from obstructing the highway.

A number of old inhabitants and neighbouring gentlemen supported the plaintiff's claim. Other witnesses stated that the ferry arose for the convenience of the barge traffic, that the inn-keeper maintained it for his own profit, and that no public right existed. The principal argument for the defence was

that no franchise of a ferry at Medmenham could be traced in any ancient records.

In giving judgment for the plaintiffs Mr. Justice Day said that upon the evidence it was clear that the ferry in question was a public ferry, and that there was a public highway to it upon each side of the river. He had been especially struck by the evidence of Mr. Cripps, Q.C., and other gentlemen of the neighbourhood. They had been in the constant habit of using the ferry for all purposes—on horseback and in carriages, as well as on foot—and had never suspected that it was not a public ferry. Having found the ferry public, it might almost be assumed that there were rights of way to it from the nearest villages on each side, and in this case there was overwhelming evidence that the villagers had used the right of way whenever they pleased. It was true that no grant could be found, but there was ample evidence upon which to presume a lost grant. The best rights in the country depended upon lost grants, which were in every way as good as existing ones. The ferry had not been well kept up, as was natural in a comparatively lonely spot, but still it was a genuine ferry in every sense of the term. (*Law Report for Supreme Court*, 19th May 1898.)

An appeal was lodged by Mr. Hudson against the above judgment, and in March 1899, in the Court of Appeal, before the Lord Chancellor, Lord Justice A. L. Smith, and Lord Justice Collins, the decision of Mr. Justice Day was upheld. The judgment given on that occasion, which is of exceptional interest, is reproduced verbatim in the appendix (p. 385).

The ferry at Medmenham was used by Edward VII (15th Nov. 1905), by the present King, Queen, and Prince of Wales (14th April 1911), and by Queen Alexandra (8th May 1915), when visiting Medmenham Abbey.

MEDMENHAM WEIR

There is much divided opinion about the original purpose of weirs upon navigable rivers. The Saxon *wera* were mere screens of stakes and bundles set across the stream to catch fish, but weirs in the modern sense appear to have developed from a dual necessity: first of all the demand for sufficient floating depth to carry river traffic, and secondly for the millers, who required them to keep up a head of water for their mills.

From time immemorial there have been mills on the Thames, and at such places dams were constructed to retain sufficient water for driving power. The mill of the manor of Medmenham stood a few hundred yards below the ancient ferry, and evidently gave its name to Frogg Mill Farm, on the Berkshire side of the stream. The weir here crossed the river between the two islands in mid-stream. On the northern bank, almost in a line with the drive from Marlow Road to Medmenham Abbey, stood the mill house, and what is now a picturesque backwater was then the channel into which the water was discharged after passing through the mill. Both weir and mill were probably of early Norman origin, but the mill fell into a state of neglect early in the thirteenth century. There were no Saxon mills named in the Domesday Survey of Medmenham. Whether Frogg was a particular family or individual, or if the word is a corruption of another origin, is without explanation. The name now survives only in Frogg Mill Farm, which was evidently not the mill house, but a farm opposite the mill.

In the year 1263, about twenty years after the death of Isabel II, the last of the Bolebecs, an inventory of the manor included this passage:

> And there is there one water mill now ruined (debile) which is not extended at more than 2*s*.

No subsequent valuation of the manor mentions this mill, from which it may be presumed that the neglect was never repaired. The weir at Frogg Mill remained until after the Dissolution, when so many weirs were abandoned that their uncared-for existence became a serious impediment to navigation. Some trace of the weir still survived in 1632, for it was mentioned that year by John Taylor, the Water Poet, in his book, *Thame Isis* :

> Next Mednam weare doth speedy mending lacke ;
> It puts the Thames and Thames puts it to wracke.

The main channel of the Thames from Magpie Island to New Lock ran nearer the Medmenham bank and north of the islands, but below Medmenham Ferry boats were towed from the opposite bank, their lines sweeping the intervening islands. This resulted in frequent damage to the barges. The Lord Mayor of London, as the result of an inspection of the upper reaches of the river in 1775, reported :

> Frogg's Mill Ait (island) being very wide, Barges are for the most part drawn on shore, and sometimes their Masts pull'd overboard : it would be much better if a channel could be made within.

In the year 1825 such a channel was cleared near the Berkshire bank, which is now used for towing boats, but most other traffic still keeps to the northern stream.

THE MANOR FISHING

There is no common of fishery in the upper Thames. Such a privilege exists only in the tidal portion of the river. The fisheries above Staines are vested in private freeholders, who generally permit the public to fish freely and uninterruptedly, provided that due regard is paid to the wishes of the owners. In some rivers immemorial usage may preserve a privilege enabling tenants of the manor to claim

such rights for themselves, but in the Thames and within the manor of Medmenham the exclusive right of fishing is the property of the owners of the bank and bed of the river.

THE ABBEY FISHING

The numerous fast days of the monks, as well as their abstinence from meat during Advent and Lent, made it necessary that any monastic community should be established near a fishing stream. Some idea of the prominence of fish in the daily diet will be gathered from the fact that the monks of Hurley fished the entire stream from Harleyford to Frogg Mill. (*See* lease, page 370.) The northern bank of the river from Frogg Mill to Westfield had been bestowed upon Medmenham Abbey, with the exception of a part of Charlmead, which has always belonged to the vicar of Medmenham. After the dissolution of the Abbey the fishing in these waters was leased by the Crown to Henry East, a yeoman farmer of Medmenham, in the following terms :

> 25th July, 1575.
> We have granted to Henry East the waters and fishery of the Thames in the parish of Medmenham together with creekes and holes (*foreis*) to the same belonging, extending from the upper part of a certain meadow called Westmeade by Hambledon unto a certain stake (*stipitem*) called Hall stake in a meadow called Medmenham meade now or late in the tenure of James Duffield gent. and William Rice Esq. lately belonging to the monastery of the blessed Mary of Medmenham now dissolved. Reserving to us and our heirs all woods, underwoods etc. at a rent of 8*s*.
>
> *Transcripts of Leases*, Vol. 18, No. 257.

THE DUKE'S FISHING

The name of Poison Ducks, which is the designation of an isolated cottage on the Berkshire bank, is a common source of wonderment to visitors. The house

stands at some distance from where the weir once existed, but it is nearly opposite the position of a stake referred to in the above transcript, which on the other bank formerly marked off the fishing rights of the manor of Medmenham. As the Dukes of Norfolk held a one-third share in the lordship of Medmenham, it seems more than probable that the name Poison Ducks was a corruption of the Norman-French *Poisson du Duc*. In the year 1461 Geoffrey Pole, who had acquired the river rights some years previously from Edmund Lenthall, leased the fishing to the monks of Hurley, by an agreement, reproduced in the appendix, which provides an interesting example of mediæval English.

THE NEW LOCK AND WEIR

The origin of the name New Lock is lost in antiquity. It has been identified in that way for at least 500 years. From this it may be presumed that in its early form it existed with open channels for navigation, and that the New Lock and weir were constructed possibly about the year 1300, when flash locks appeared on the Thames. The new form of lock was the subject of considerable grievance. In the year 1316 a commission was issued to William de Monte Acuto, to inquire into the matter between Oxford and Wallingford :

> That the Abbot of Abindon and other men who have weirs on the River Thames . . . have reconstructed them of such a height that the lands on each side are flooded ; and have constructed certain obstacles on the weirs, which are called " lockes," by which ships and boats are unable to pass.
>
> *Calendar of Patent Rolls*, 1313–17, p. 501.

The New Lock at Wittington, which was of the flash-lock type, was a break of 10 to 20 feet in the weir, filled with movable tackle, such as paddles and other appliances, which held back the water. The

tackle was kept in position by fitting against a sill at the bottom of the river, and against the weir bridge above. When the paddles were removed the flash of water through the channel provided sufficient depth to float the barge across the weir. Any vessel proceeding up stream was poled through the opening, pulled by horses on a tow line, or hauled by a rope and winch. This cumbersome operation was attended with great waste of water, seeing that the level of two entire reaches of the river had to be almost equalised for the purpose of passing a vessel.

While Wittington and Harleyford were in possession of Sir Miles Hobart he entered into an agreement with Richard, Lord Lovelace of Hurley, by which Lord Lovelace, on behalf of himself and his successors, undertook to maintain in good repair at his own cost the whole of the weir from Harleyford to Hurley Mills.

> Indenture. 22nd July 1628.
> Sir Miles Hobart, in consideration of 6*d.* paid by Lord Lovelace, grants to Lovelace his heirs and assigns full power for his and their servants and workfolks from time to time to dig and take away from the chalk pits in Harleyford ground next adjoining the said weir such chalk as shall be necessary not only for the repair of the said part of the said lock and weir only, but also for the repair of the said weir reaching from Harleyford Bank to Hurley Mills.
>
> *Additional Charter* 17033.

Sir East George Clayton East, of Hall Place, Hurley, the successor of Lord Lovelace, negotiated a successful deal in 1840 with the Thames Navigation Commissioners, by which he sold them for £1000 " all the lock on the river Thames, situate in the Parish of Hurley." On the plan attached to this deed the parish of Hurley was shown as being on both sides of the river. The vendor included in this his own rights to " New Lock and the weir thereunto belonging," also the old flash lock and winch at Wittington, and

the weir adjoining to the Buckinghamshire bank, "together with the tolls and dues payable in respect of the said lock." He not only disposed of his own modest property in the weir, but he also sold to the Commissioners the lock and winch, and the tolls and dues, which were the freehold of Oxford University! No one questioned the transaction until after Wittington was acquired by Mr. Hudson Kearley, M.P., when the Thames Conservancy in 1898 asserted their ownership of the winch by enclosing it, but they were obliged to withdraw their claim. The winch is preserved on the river bank at Wittington as an object of interest, and it is reputed to be the only one of its kind surviving on the Thames.

HURLEY POUND LOCK

It became imperative as the vessels engaged in navigation increased to find some means of passing them up and down the river without the loss of water and inconvenient delays associated with the flash lock, and the form of lock now in use then began to be adopted. They became known as pound locks, from the act of impounding the water between a double set of gates, and they gradually supplanted the old type. The pound lock at Hurley was opened in 1773, being one of the first seven. In the beginning it had open sides, then later on timber sides were introduced, which gave place within the last few years to masonry. The early pound locks seem to have been very unsatisfactory. The sale of the tolls and dues of the old lock in 1840 (*see* p. 393) would suggest that the flash lock at Wittington was in common use until the middle of the last century. Some years afterwards, in October 1871, Sir William Clayton unsuccessfully sought permission to lay a boom across the channel at Harleyford House, from which it may

be presumed that the flash lock had been altogether abandoned, and that the channel north of Harleyford Island had settled into its present existence as one of the most delightful backwaters of the Thames.

THE REVENUE OF THE RIVER

The vessels passing up and down stream were once a rich source of income to each lock proprietor, because heavy traffic, until well into the nineteenth century, was almost entirely transported by water. The toll at New Lock in 1771 was 3*d.* for five tons, including the use of the winch. Fifty years later the charge was more than doubled, being 15*s.* for 140 tons, and for the winch 2*s.* extra. Up to about 1860 the tolls between Staines and Oxford averaged 1½*d.* per ton per mile. Within the next thirty years, as the railways competed for traffic, river tolls came down to ¼*d.* per ton per mile. All tolls and fees are now collected by the Thames Conservancy, but the great bulk of the river revenue comes from payment for the abstraction of water by the Metropolitan Water Board, the corporations of Oxford and Reading, and other public bodies. The present cost of maintaining the upper river is about £90,000 a year, without reckoning capital outlay required for occasional improvements.

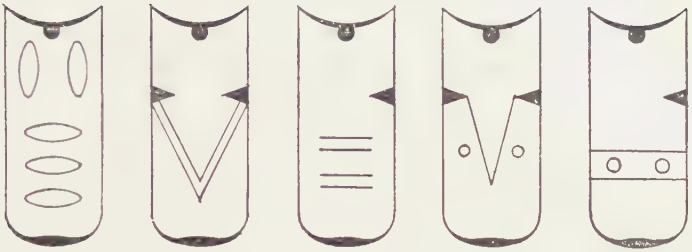
THE SWANS ON THE THAMES

There are few objects which contribute to the charm of the Thames more than the swans, which are met at intervals on all parts of the river, but are more commonly found near the villages and towns, where they are fed by visitors. The birds are chiefly the property of the Crown and the Worshipful Companies of Dyers and Vintners. The swan was considered a royal bird, therefore it was protected by a

number of regulations. By a statute of Edward IV. no persons other than the King are allowed to possess swans on the Thames except by licence of the Crown. This rule has always been jealously guarded. Permission for two of the City Companies to keep swans was a movement to conciliate the wealthy traders of London, by extending to them certain privileges once granted only to the nobility. It is uncertain when the right of the City Companies was first created, but it was well established before 1509, because in that year the custom is referred to in a book of accounts of the Vintners' Company now preserved at the British Museum. The Vintners' Company is sometimes in possession of as many as five hundred swans.

The practice of marking the swans arose first of all in Buckinghamshire, where after an action in 1484–5 taken by Lord Strange and Sir John Charlton a decision was enrolled settling the question of ownership. Since that time swan-uppers have been appointed each year to count and mark the birds. This inspection begins on the last Monday in July, when the cygnets are about two months old. The three swan wardens, representing the Crown and the Companies of the Vintners and the Dyers, meet at Southwark Bridge, and proceed together on their voyage up the Thames. While the river was fashionable barges often accompanied the expedition to witness the sport of swan-upping, but the custom has died out, and the annual event now passes almost unnoticed. The rule adopted is that young birds are taken up in the presence of the King's warden, and a mark is cut in the skin of the beak similar to that upon the beak of the parent bird. Any grown birds found without marks are claimed by a statute of Queen Elizabeth (1591–2) as the property of the Crown. The following marks are those most familiar on the reaches of the river between Windsor and Oxford :

SWAN-MARKS



The marks are called nicks, and the mark of the Vintners is two nicks. From this is derived the familiar but otherwise incomprehensible tavern sign : "The swan with two necks." The swan-mark of the King has been used continuously since the reign of George III.

Each pair of swans has its own district on the river, which is jealously guarded against intruders. The birds seldom wander except to nest by the brooks. Their food consists of the soft parts of water plants, roots, river insects, also small fish, grain, and bread. During the severe winter food is provided by the swan wardens, and it is sent up the river to be distributed by local agents.

LODGE FARM, MEDMENHAM (*see* p. 321).

APPENDIX OF HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS

" Our revels now are ended."

The Tempest
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616)

a. The Barony of Montacute and Monthermer
b. Lease of Fishery and Weir of Wittington, 1461
c. Conveyance of the Hall Lands of Medmenham, 1496
d. Record found in the Monastery of Medmenham, 1496
e. Churchwardens' Presentments at the Parochial Visitation, 1637
f. Some Correspondence of Edmund Duffield, 1741–6
g. Judgment in the Action relating to Medmenham Ferry, 1899

APPENDIX OF HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS

a. THE BARONY OF MONTACUTE AND MONTHERMER

(*See* p. 99.)

THE peerage of Montacute and Monthermer has a special interest for ourselves, arising from the fact that the title has been in abeyance since the attainder of Henry Pole, who held the manor of Medmenham, and lived at Bockmer.

The barony of Montacute originated in a writ of summons to Parliament in the year 1299 issued to Simon de Montacute. William the third Baron Montacute was created Earl of Salisbury by Edward III, and he received from the King the manor of Bisham, Berkshire. This title was also enjoyed by a descendant, John, Earl of Salisbury and Lord Montacute, who through his father's marriage with Margaret, *suo jure* Baroness Monthermer, was also Baron Monthermer. Through an unsuccessful attempt to restore King Richard II, this earl was beheaded by the mob, and subsequently in 1400 was attainted. By an Act of Parliament (1421) his dignities were restored to his son, Thomas de Montacute, who was killed at the Siege of Orleans in 1428, by almost the first cannon shot used in the west of Europe. The daughter of this earl, Alice de Montacute, married Sir Richard Neville, who was recognised as Earl of Salisbury, and was beheaded at York in 1460, for his attachment to the Lancastrian cause. The eldest son of this marriage was Richard Neville, the King Maker, Earl of Warwick and Salisbury and Lord Montacute and Monthermer, who had two daughters—Isabel, wife of George, Duke of Clarence, and mother of Margaret Plantagenet, and Ann, first betrothed to Edward, Prince of Wales, son of Henry VI, and afterwards married to Richard, Duke of Gloucester, who became Richard III.

After the battle of Barnet in 1471, where the King Maker was killed, his dignities fell into abeyance. In the following

year George, Duke of Clarence, was created Earl of Salisbury, but he did not hold the baronies of Montacute and Monthermer. His son Edward Plantagenet is generally considered to have inherited the latter dignities upon the death of his aunt Ann, Queen of England, in 1485. The title Countess of Salisbury was restored by Henry VIII to Margaret Plantagenet, then widow of Sir Richard Pole, K.G. Her eldest son, Sir Henry Pole, somewhat later was summoned to Parliament as Lord Montacute and Monthermer. Both son and mother were attainted in 1539, when their honours were again forfeited.

Henry Pole, Lord Montacute and Monthermer, married about 1520 Jane Neville, by whom he had two daughters—Katherine, who married Francis, Earl of Huntingdon, and Winifred, who became the wife of Sir Thomas Barrington. These daughters were restored in blood and honours by an Act of Parliament under Philip and Mary; and in 1861 a petition was sent up by William Selby Lowndes, of Whaddon, Buckinghamshire, praying that he might be declared coheir to the barony of Montacute, and as such entitled to the dignity. The ground of this petition was the descent of William Selby Lowndes from Winifred, Lady Barrington. At the same time his brother of Chesham made a similar claim for the barony of Monthermer.

The petitioners begged that the Montacute and Monthermer peerage being in abeyance between them and the Viscount Hastings, sole heir of Francis, Earl of Huntingdon, it might be decided in favour of the petitioners. After receiving a great deal of documentary evidence, the case was indefinitely adjourned by the Committee for Privilege of the House of Lords.

b. A LEASE (1461) OF THE FISHERY AND WEIR WITHIN THE LORDSHIP OF MEDMENHAM FROM GEOFFREY POLE AND HIS WIFE EDITH TO THE PRIOR AND CONVENT OF HURLEY (*see* p. 69).

This Endenture made the xij day of September the yer and Regne of Kyng Edward the fourth the fyrste betwene Dan Edmund Downe Priour & the Covent of the House of Hurle in the Counte of Barks. on that oon partye and Jeffrey Poole squyer & Edyth his Wyfe in the Counte of Buks. on that oder partye Wyttnessyth

that the seyd Jeffrey & Edyth hath grauntyd & lete to ferme unto the seyd Pryour & Covent & to theyr Successours theyr Water & fysshyng Wyth in the lordeshyp of Medemenham in the Counte of Buks. foreseyd Wyth a Were and a lockestapyll ther to perteyning in maner & forme as old William Sprott of Medemanham late held Wyth all the hole draughtys & all oder maner of fysshyng parteynyng to the same Excepte that the same Jeffrey & the seyd Edyth reseruyth to them theyr Eyres & theyr assygneyes yerly to have duryng the seyd terme vj tymes in the yer fre fysshyng wyth a draught nett through all the seyd water at such Sesons as the seyd Jeffrey & the seyd Edyth theyr Eyres & theyr Assygneyes shall thenke most conuenable And that the seyd Pryour & Covent graunton for them & theyr successours to the seyd Jeffrey & Edyth to theyr Eyres & theyr Assygneyes duryng the seyd terme that the seyd Pryour & Covent duryng the seyd terme shall fynd at all tymes of the seyd vj sesons fysshyng nettys wyth fysshers bootys & seruantes of the seyd Pryour & Covent & of theyr Successours the which water & fysshyng wer locke & stapyll of old tyme perteynyd to the hall lond wyth in the seyd lordshyp of Medmenham some tyme beyng the lond of Raufe Medmenham & late the lond of John de la Lude To have & to hold the seyd water fysshyng were & locke stapyll unto the seyd Pryour & Covent & to theyr Successours in forme a foreseyd froo the feste of Mychaelmas next folowyng the date of this writeng unto the terme of iiij^{xx} yer be fully accomplysshyd & fulfyllyd payyng yerly ther for unto the foreseyd Jeffrey & Edyth theyr Eyres & theyr Assygneyes xxvj s. viij d. at the festys of the Annuncyacyon of our lady & Mychaelmas by evene porcyons And yf the foreseyd yerly Rent of xxvj s. viij d. be not payde in parte or all by a monyth after eny of the seyd festys duryng the seyd terme then the seyd Pryour & Covent for them & theyr Successours graunton be thes presentz that the seyd Jeffrey & Edyth theyr Eyres & Assygneyes shall dystreyn in all the londys medis & pastures that the seyd Pryour & Covent & theyr Successours have or shall have wythin the lordeshyp of Hurle And the seyd dystress so takyn hyt shalbe levefull unto the foreseyd Jeffrey & Edyth theyr Eyres or theyr Assygneyes them to lede cary & dryve a waye & them to wythhold unto such tym the seyd Rent & euery parte therof wyth all the costys & expens that shall growe by mene of the same be fully content & payd And yf so fall that the seyd Jeffrey & Edyth theyr Eyres or theyr Assygneyes may not fynd suffycyaunt distresse wyth in the seyd lordeshyp of Hurle at eny tyme of the seyd termys for eny parte of the seyd Rente beyng on payde or ony maner of Impediment be hade wherby the seyd Jeffrey be taryed of his seyd Rent, then shall hyt be levefull

unto the seyd Jeffrey & Edyth theyr Eyres & Assygneyes in all the seyd water fysshyng were & locke stapull & euery parte ther of to reenter in theyr former estate this endentures not withstondyng And the seyd Pryour & Covent & theyr Successours shall make with in vj yer after the begynnyng of the seyd terme the seyd were locke & the lockestapyll wyth a wynch newe at theyr owne proper costys & expens & that is to be sette in the seyd water upon the seyd Jeffrey & Edythys ground & in such placys as by the seyd Pryour & Jeffrey cane be thought moste expedyent And the seyd Pryour & Covent & theyr successours yerly duryng the seyd terme suffycyauntly shall repayr the seyd wer locke stapyll & wynch at theyr owne proper charge And in the ende of the seyde terme wel & suffycyauntly they so to leve hyt repayred And the seyd Jeffrey & Edyth graunton that they shall delyuer to the fyrst makyng of the seyd wer locke stapyll & wynch certen tymbre & chalke as ther to then shalbe nedefull in such places as shall be thought to the seyd Jeffrey & Edyth moste expedyent Wyth in the foreseyd Hall lond in the seyd lordeshyp of Medmenham And yf by the seyd Pryour & Covent or by ther Successours the seyd were locke stapyll & wynche be not suffycyauntly made nor kepte in dwe reparacyon yerly duryng the seyd terme and so by them not left suffycyauntly repayred in the end of the seyd terme or in defaute of the seyd payment at the seyd termys yf no such distresse wythin the seyd lordeshypp of Hurle can be found, as a fore rehersyd, then the foreseyd Pryour & Covent byndyth them & theyr Successours unto the seyd Jeffrey and Edyth & to theyr Eyres to forefett & lese unto the seyd Jeffrey & Edyth & to theyr Eyres in xxti of lawfulle money And the seyd Jeffrey & Edyth for them & theyr Eyres the seyd Water fysshyng wer lockestapyll & Wynch to the seyd Pryour & Covent & to theyr Successours shall warrant & defend At all tymys duryng the seyd terme In Wyttnesse of the Whyche the seyd Pryour & Covent by ther commyn assent in theyr house accustumid callyd the Chapterhouse of the seyd Pryory unto that oon partye of thes endenturs have sete to the Covent seale of the seyd house with the propyr sygnet of the seyd Pryour And the seyd Jeffrey & Edyth unto that oder partye of thes endenturs have putto theyr seales in the yer & day a fore rehersyd.

[Seals missing.]

[*Endorsement.*]

This endenture was Relest agen of Sir Renold Bray the xj yere of King Henry the vijth that was to come of y^e^ yeres xlv yere. The Rent thereof w^t^. y^e^. thyth alone a C marcs per me J.H.

Westminster Abbey Muniment, No. 2332.

c. A CONVEYANCE OF THE HALL LANDS OF MEDMENHAM (1496) FROM SIR RICHARD POLE TO SIR REGINALD BRAY (*see* p. 73)

THIS endenture made the xxijth day of the moneth of Nouember the xjth yere of our Souereigne lord King Harry the vijth bitwene sir Reynold Bray knyght of the oone partie. and sir Richard Pole knyght of the other partie. Witnesseth that the seid sir Richard hath bargayned and solde to the seid sir Reynold certeyne parcelles of lond medewe and woode ensuyng that is to sey a parcell of lond called the haule lond. beyng and lying bitwene the lordship of Medemenham and the lond of Harlforde in the Countie of Buk' with the appurtenaunces the seid haule lond abuttyng vppon the Teames on the South partie and Harlford londes on the Este partie vnto an high wey commyng from Marlowe to Henley vppon the Teames whiche high way goth aboute the same grounde vnto Hemyng well on the South partie and also a grete Mede called the Est Mede with thappurtenaunces beyng and lying bitwene the Abbey of Medemenham and the Teames on the Est partie and it abutteth vppon a Close called the Courte Gardyn and vppon a Close called Waybroke on the West partie and vppon a Close called Chalcrofte on the West partie and vppon the Teames on the South partie and Hewys Close and Hewys mede lyeth vppon the North partie of the seid Est Mede and a Streme called Hemmyng Well that goth to the Teames and also a were vppon the same Teames adioynyng to the same Haule lond with the appurtenaunces on the South partie of the seid haule Grounde/and also a Quarrey of Chalkestone to the seid haule grounde belongyng with the appurtenaunces and also a Grove of Woode of xxxj Acres and an half called the halle Grove with the appurtenaunces that extendeth from Bukmere Woode to Hynden and the Northsyde of the same Grove boundyng vppon Malle feldes and that other syde in to Gulmyns/and also a parcell of grounde in the tenure of Geffrey Sprotte lying in the halle grounde with the appurtenaunces. and also a parcell of lond called Gulmyns with the appurtenaunces the which begynneth at the high way commyng from Marlowe to Henley vppon Teames the high way South and a grounde called Redslowe Woode on the Est and streccheth to a place called Mere beches/Which Mere beches parteth bitwixt Marlowe lordship and Medenham lordship. there is an hedge from the same Mere beches that parteth bitwixt Gulmyns on the North partie and Bukmere Woode whiche hedge extendeth vnto a feld called Malle feldes whiche is on the Northsyde of the same Gylmyns and there is an hedge then that parteth Malle feldes and Gylmyns that extendeth to a grounde called Marlyng

Deane. which Marlyng Deane streccheth to a place called Gybbes Gardyn which Gybbys Gardyn maketh the boundes of Kynges vppon the North. Whiche Kynges is within the bounds of Gylmyns. there is a grounde called the Mounte beyng of the West parte of the same Kynges whiche that William Lynne holdeth. And recheth downe to a grounde called Hasildene. From the same Hasildene there is a close called Dagmere Crofte which Dagmere Crofte is of the West partie of Hynden. There is a Crofte called Werys Crofte lying bitwixt Dagmer Crofte and Selynger Woode There is a grounde called Salanger Wode of the South partie of Hynden and also a grounde called Bery Deane there is an hedge that parteth bitwixt Biriden Salanger Woode and Hynden vnto a way called hall lond and fro thens it extendeth to the streme called Hemmyng Well commyng from Medenam in to Teames The same Byryden boundeth vppon the West parte of the same Grounde that belongeth to Gylmyns and Hynden. And also Kynges and Hynden with their appurtenaunces the whiche bothe parcelles be within the boundes of Gylmyns with alle manere trees and woode growyng in eny of the seid parcelles and in the seid Kynges and Hynden. To have and to holde to the seid Sir Reynold and to hys heires for evermore from the feste of the Annunciacioun of our lady last paste and alle maner issuez and profites growyng and commyng of alle the seid parcelles from the feste aforseid. And the seid sir Richard graunteth and byndeth hym self by thiez presentes to the seid sir Reynold that he and the lady Margaret hys wyf at alle tymes herafter shall be redy whan and what tyme they or eny of theym shall be requyred by the seid sir Reynold or hys heirez to make or cause to be made suche sufficient sure and lawefull Astate of the premissez to the seid sir Reynold and his heires and to such other persones as he shall name to hys vse and do and demeane theym and suffre to be done ayenst theym for the seid suertie to be had and made for the premyssez in fourme afore reherced by dede feoffement Recouere Fyne Warantie relesse confirmacioun and otherwyse as shalbe aduysed by the Counceill of the seid sir Reynold or of hys heires at the proper costes and charges of the seid sir Reynold or of hys heirez. For the whiche bargayne Sale Astates and Suertie of the same to be had made and sufferd in fourme aforeseid the seid sir Reynold hath and shall pay to the seid sir Richard the Somme of CCCClij li. xvj s. viij d. wherof the seid sir Reynold hath payde to the seid sir Richard before the seid feste of the Annunciacioun of our lady CC li. sterlinges and therof & of the same Some of CC li. at the seid tyme the seid sir Richard knowlegeth hym self to be content and payde by thiez presentes and therof by the same presentes acquyteth and discahrgeth the seid sir Reynold and hys

heirez for euermore. And the residue of the seid CCCClij li. xvj s. viij d. the said sir Reynold shall content and pay to the seid sir Richard or to hys assigneez at alle tymes whan he shalbe by the seid sir Richard reasonably requyred. And moreouer the seid sir Richard graunteth by thiez presentes that he shall delyuer and cause to be delyuerd to the seid sir Reynold or to hys heirez alle maner Chartrez evydences mynumentes and writynges concernyng the parcelles aboueseid and every of theym beyng in hys possessioun or in any other persons possessioun to hys vse to hys knowlegge Except suche Chartrez Evidences writynges and mynumentes that concernyth the hole lordship of Medemenham wherunto and wherof the parcelles aboueseid be parcell annexed and appurtenaunte the whiche Chartrez writynges and munymentes so excepted the seid sir Richard graunteth by thiez presentes that he shall delyuer or cause to be delyuerd before the feste of Candelmas next commyng to the Priour of Byrsham to thentent that aswell the seid sir Reynold as the seid sir Richard or their heirez or assigneez may haue thereof Copyes or Inspexsimus at their pleasure before the feste of Pentecoste next commyng. and that within the space of a half yere than next ensuyng alle the same evidences so excepted be put in to a cheste locked with ij lockes wherof the oone key shall remayne with the seid sir Reynold and with hys heirez and the other with the seid sir Richard and hys heirez. and the same Chest shalbe by bothe theym delyuerd to the same Prioure or in to some other place of Religioun by dede endented tripartite enterchaungeably sealed with theire Seales remaynyng in their seuerall kepynges makyng menciouns that the same Euydence shall remayne in the kepyng of suche Souereigne and hys Successours as they so shalbe delyuerd vnto aswell to the vse and behooffe of the seid sir Reynold and of hys heirez and assigneez as of the seid sir Richard hys heirez and assigneez so that euery of theym at alle tymes may resorte to the same. And that suche ententes and vses be putte in the same writyng more at large as by The Counceils of the seid sir Reynold and sir Richard or theire heires shalbe ordred and advised touchyng the delyueraunce redelyueraunce and sauff kepyng of the same evidence. And ouer this it is couenaunted and agreed bitwene the seid partiez that the seid sir Richard shall cause to discend by hym and after hys decesse immediatly to hys next heire of blode that than shall fortune to be londes Tenementes or Rentes in fee symple of a goode and sure Astate in the lawe the whiche shalbe and ammounte to the yerely value of xviij li. viij s. viij d. ouer and aboue alle charges to thentent that the same londes Tenementes or rentes and other premysses so descended with the warantie of the seid sir Richard may be a sufficient Asses in the lawe to hys seid next heire so that the seid

next heire of the seid sir Richard may therby be vtterly barred and excluded of any accioun that they shall fortune to sue attempte or demaunde of the premyssez or any parte therof sold by the seid sir Richard. In witnes wherof the partiez aforeseid to thyez endentures enterchaungeably haue sette to theire Seales the day and yere aboueseid.

[Seal attached.]

Oxf. Univ. Archives, K. II. 10.

[*Endorsed*] :—*Irrotulatur in Dorso* [*Rotulorum Litterarum*] *Clausarum Cancellariae Regis infrascripti mense Decembris annoque regni Regis infrascripto.*

d. TRANSLATION OF A RECORD FOUND IN THE MONASTERY OF MEDMENHAM IN THE YEAR 1496

Be it known to all people by these presents that a certain record was found in the Monastery of Medmeham in the year 1496, the beginning of which was destroyed, and the meaning of the rest follows :—that the monks of Medmeham fled to the monastery of Wouborne on account of the persecution of a young knight (tiro) called Raynaud, except three who remained; that the same Raynaud caused them to be robbed by his lawless men-at-arms and [put out of] the monastery ; at length, by reason of the many ills and injuries and molestations, which the aforesaid Raynaud did to the aforesaid monks, and caused to be done to them, all the monks fled from the place and thus left the monastery empty and [went] to the monastery of Wouborn, so that their mother house might help them, and there remained, and carried with them the bones of their founder from the Monastery of Medmeham to the Monastery of Wouborn, to pray more devoutly for him, and so, not to be unthankful. Raynaud, seeing the manor empty, entered [it] and kept it in his custody until the lawful age of the heir, and married his daughter to him who was called Eghelyn de Courteney and [he] was made a knight and obtained his lands, and they had sons, one to another ; but he died early, a hard death. And the same Walter [1] was lying sick at Wallingford and his conscience was much troubled about his father's deed as to the foundation of the Monastery of Medmeham and for the evils done to the monks of Medmeham, and being sincerely penitent he made a confirmatory charter of his father's deed of foundation of the Monastery of

[1] *Sic.* There seems some omission here. The allusion is evidently to Walter de Bolebec, the "heir," who married Eghelyn de Courteney.

Medmeham and sent to the Monastery of Wouburn for the convent to come back to Medmeham. When the aforesaid Raynaud heard [this] he immediately caused the said Walter, sick as he was, to be carried to Medmeham to keep the monks from entering. And Walter died within the said manor much troubled in spirit and by a hard death, so that his head was split asunder and divided into four parts. And after his death Medmeham became the dower of Eghelyn and she took another husband, Sir Gilbert Basset, and they had one son, who soon died within the said manor, whereby they were greatly grieved. Then the aforesaid Eghelyn begged her lord that she might make a vow. He granted it her. Then said she :—" I see well that God has avenged himself on us, because of that manor which was given to the Cistercian order, since I have never had any joy in any son which I have borne. Therefore I vow to God and to his sweet mother that if once I leave that manor I will never enter at any other time nor return to the same manor." And they came to Wouburn and prayed the Abbot urgently that he should cause the convent to return to Medmeham. And thus that lord with his spouse withdrew from the same manor without returning thereto. But the Abbot took counsel on the matter. And a certain Hubert Walter, Archbishop of Canterbury,[1] then chief of the King's Council, gave them this advice, that those monks who, on account of the injuries of the said Raynaud, left the manor without licence and without judgment and without [the permission of] the King's Court, when they found it empty, should without the King's licence or the licence of the royal Court return to the said manor, and the monks did so and held [the manor] in good peace all the time of Eghelyn. And after her death and the death of her two sisters who died without issue, Countess Isabella de Bolbek who remained heir of the whole barony levied a writ against the Abbot of Medmeham, that the Abbot & Monks of Medmeham had no other entry into the said manor save by Eghelyn de Courtney who did not have that manor. But the monks said, on the other hand, that they did not claim the said manor after that fashion nor by that entry, but by their first entry, to wit by lord Hugh father of the said Countess [and by his] grant & gift. And after this manner the pleadings lasted a long time. At length, towards the end of the pleadings, about the tenth year, assize was sought and twelve sworn knights came before Sir William de Rale, who was then sitting on the Bench under Sir Stephen de Segrave, and gave their verdict for the monks touching the first entry which they had by their founder, and their verdict was enrolled. Then the countess and her counsel saw these things

[1] May 1193–July 1205 ; Chancellor from 1199–1205.

and were in great doubt and sent in haste to Sir Stephen de Segrave informing him that, unless he came quickly, the Countess would lose all. And when the said Sir Stephen heard this, he came at once, and sat on the Bench and caused the Assize touching Medmeham to be sought. The knights answered that their verdict was enrolled on the rolls, and when he could get no other answer, he asked them whether the last entry which the monks had was with the will of the lady Eghelyn or against her will. Then the knights, astounded thereat, answered freely, that they rather considered that they had entered with, than against, her will, and he caused this answer to be written down, and upon this was grounded all the right of the Countess. But she soon afterwards died without heir of her body, distracted and hard of heart. And then [her interest] descended to the Earl of Varinne who was often asked by the Abbot and monks of Medmeham to restore to them their original foundation, to wit the said manor with its appurtenances, and this he would not do; and so he died without issue. Then the inheritance came to Sir Richard, Earl of Arundel; but the Lady Joan Bars Countess Varinne received for the time the said manor of Medmeham as her dower, and she, seeing that by rights the said manor belonged to the monks, urged Sir Richard, Earl of Arundel often, when she was wont to see him, that he would restore the manor to the monks aforesaid, and he allowed her to do so or to recompense them by some other equivalent. But after the death of the said lady Countess Joan, Sir Richard Earl of Arundel aforesaid entered upon the said manor and intended to restore it to the monks aforesaid had he not been prevented from his good intention by Sir Hugh Berewyk, his steward, and a certain Ralph then warrener in the said manor, of whom the first after many troubles remained dumb for two years before his death and the second, to wit Ralph, drowned himself in the water of the Thames near the Monastery of Medmeham. Then, Sir Robert Redyng, Abbot of the said Monastery of Medmeham, seeing his enemies destroyed by a wretched death, approached the said Earl for the restoration of the said manor, to wit of his first foundation, so that the Convent might serve God there honourably in accordance with the wishes and institution of the founder, where he found Sir John,[1] the Earl's son, somehow hardened against him, and certain others of the said Earl's council who did not wish that the same manor should be handed over to the monks, but that some church, of equal value to the manor, should be appropriated to them by the

[1] *Sic.* Possibly an illegitimate son, for by his first wife he had one son (Edmund) and three daughters, and his first son, Richard, by his second wife (with whom he had cohabited before the divorce) was not born till 1346.

said Earl in recompence for it. But the said Earl Richard delayed too long [in fulfilling] his promise, and therefore sustained many misfortunes and the ill opinion and obloquy of men, and amongst other things he was divorced in the Roman Court and in England, and was separated with great scandal from his lawful wife to the disinheritance of Sir Edmund a very handsome and valiant knight his eldest son, and took another wife by whom he had diverse sons and daughters viz. Sir Richard, whom he constituted his heir instead of the said Sir Edmund, and a certain other knight Sir John had lands and possessions, also he had a third son by his last wife, to wit Thomas who was bishop of Ely, afterwards translated to the Archiepiscopal See of York in the time of schism by Pope Urban V, in the lifetime of Sir Alexander Nevyll Archbishop of the same See and again translated by Pope Boniface IX to the See of Canterbury and finally exiled from England by the King and Parliament held at London. But the rest of his sons perished, as follows; for the aforesaid Sir John who hindered his father from restoring his manor and the lands of Medmenham with the appurtenances to the said monks was immediately drowned in the sea and his body with many others drowned with him was thrown up on the shores of Ireland. And for this cause that ship alone, in which he was, perished while the remaining ships escaped the danger of the storm. But his father, not taking to heart that judgment nor the others before it died without restoring the manor to the monks after many extortions from the people. And to him succeeded in the inheritance Richard, the first born son of his second wife, and he was made Earl of Arundel after his father, and would not restore that manor to the monks but gave the daughter of his elder brother aforesaid, [viz.] Sir Edmund,[1] to Sir John Meryok knight in marriage, giving to them and their heirs the aforesaid manor of Medmeham. But the same knight with his wife and household dwelt in the same monastery of Medmeham for about two years, bringing much damage and trouble to the Abbot and monks, and about the end of the two years there was so great an inundation of the water of the Thames that it filled the houses cellars and rooms where the aforesaid knight lived, and the waters encroached on the roads, so that food could not come to him, and thus, driven by necessity, he fled to Henley and did not return any more. But he with his wife and son perished shortly afterwards by sudden death. After his decease, the aforesaid Earl, the younger, re-entered the said manor of Medmeham and would not restore it to the Abbot and monks the rightful lords of the same manor,

[1] Edmund married before July 1349 Sibyl, daughter of William (Montagu), Earl of Salisbury.

nor would he look upon their charters & the right which he[1] had to the manor nor upon the abbot who, when it pleased the King to come, could not [do so] at his own expense by reason of his poverty. But he prosecuted his claim against the said Abbot with wrath and often repelled the Abbot with evil words threatening him with prison, whose [own] end was in prison, for, as a punishment for his sin, he was accused of treason and found guilty and beheaded near the Tower of London[2] and this by the King and all the Parliament in the month of September 1397. And his lands and castles were forfeited and given to others. And in this Parliament Thomas his brother, Archbishop of Canterbury, as we have narrated above, was sent into perpetual exile. To whom there succeeded in the Archbishopric, by provision, the King's Treasurer, whilst the lands and demesnes of the said Earl Richard were in the hands of King Richard. Sir Roger, formerly a monk of Wouburn, and then Abbot of the said Monastery of Medmeham, prosecuted his claim in the form of a petition to the King asking that the King with his Council would deign to inspect the charters muniments and his claim and his monastery's which they have and from the first had to the said manor of Medmeham, and to make restitution to the same Monastery of the said manor with its appurtenances either by favour or out of the rigour of the law. And although his reasonable petition was placed among the other petitions to Parliament and was often laid and renewed in the hands of the King, yet he neither obtained the restoration of the manor nor a reasonable answer. But the lord King gave the same manor to Lord de le Spenser, whom in the said Parliament he made Earl of Gloucester. And indeed this lord de le Spenser took in ill part the Abbot's prosecution touching the said manor, and against him also the Abbot prosecuted his claim, being ready to make [it] clear to the said lord and his council, asking the said lord not to take offence at his prosecution, but that he would do him the favour of letting him have the said manor again—who was not heard out. But what came after that, and what vengeance followed for the denial of justice and for the unjust detention of the same manor with its appurtenances, God knows, Who alone knows all things. Yet, let us set down here, some things which, as is credibly believed, happened afterwards as a punishment of sin. For the King himself, who would not restore her inheritance to the Blessed Virgin and her servants, was deprived of the heir of his body, although he had two wives. Secondly, because he refused to do favour and justice to the monks by restoring them what was theirs, the favour of God was withdrawn from him, and he was given into the hands of evil counsellors

[1] *Sic.* [2] In Cheapside. (See G.E.C., *Complete Peerage*, i. 244.)

COMMUNION PLATE

SILVERED flagon (1835); silver cruet-paten (1904); pewter flagon (1663); silver-gilt paten (1637); and silver-gilt chalice (1637). *Left to right.*

To face p. 380.

and being led astray by their counsel, did many evil deeds in his reign, on account of which evil deeds he was cast out from the government of the kingdom, a sad and swift death following thereon, concerning the nature of which death opinions differ. Moreover, the Noble Duke, John of Lancaster, who rebelled, not being willing to obey the said Parliament, was beheaded.[1] And the aforesaid Lord de Spenser not long after was beheaded vilely by the people of Bristol.

Anct. D. (*Public Record Office*), A.14647.

e. CHURCHWARDENS' PRESENTMENTS AT THE PAROCHIAL VISITATION, 1637[2]

MEDMENHAM,
12 *Aug:* 3 *Bells.*

THE Seats want boarding in the bottomes. The Clarkes Seat to be taken away, Richard Paget, for placeing of Seat without Authoritie and in the Isle. The Seats on y^e^ Northside of the Church viz^t^. M^r^. Dufhills the La: Jones and her Servants are high pewes. The partition to be taken downe to y^e^ middle beame M^rs^. Barnards Pew, to be taken away, it stops up y^e^ North Dore. The Wainscott over y^e^ Com: Table in decay. The K. Armes to be sett higher as at Marlowe magna and guilded. The Ten Commandments to be placed over the Communion Table and y^e^ Wall to be whitened. The foundacion in great decay round about of Church and Chancell. The Wall vnder the Eaves to be repared. The butterrices in decay, both of y^e^ Corners of y^e^ Steeple and Chanc: the North porch to be opened and repared, and to have a dore and benches. And y^e^ South porch a Dore, and the Windowes of the said porch to be barred closser y^e^ weeds to be cutt downe. The[3] . . . part of the mounds is dead hedge, and the rest being rayld but . . . Cannons, strange preachers, a hood, a new Cover for y^e^ font . . . 27 1538. Registrum incipit: A new Challice and Cover, The Tower of Steeple withinside in decay, there wants ropes for y^e^ well. . . . Two new Seats on the Northside of the Chancell to high. There is an old Seat, Stands on the Southside over against which wants benching and boardinge. The Dore of the Church house openeth into the Churchyard, And John Burrage the Churchwarden dwells in it, which he was inioyned to turne, citentur gardiani prioris pro

[1] John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, died a natural death in 1399, long after these events.

[2] The original heading, which is missing, would have stated by whom the above visitation was made.

[3] MS. worn away here.

quatuor annis vltimis, promissis etc. qui divites sunt. The walls of the Chancell looke blacke with moisture, A new pulpit and reading Seat, A new cloth cushion and Pulpit cloth to be fringd ; and Suitable to y^e^ Carpett which is to be fringd, The pavement in y^e^ Chanc: to be made even Gabriell Erles is parish Clarke whose certaine wages is about xx^s^. per annum. John Burrage gardian is to make a Terrier of the Church house and lands and y^e^ butting and boundings 12°. Septembris monitus fuit sic ad certificandum. a poore mans box. A new Challice and Cover and Flagon.

MS. Bucks Archd: Papers, C.235.

f. CORRESPONDENCE OF EDMUND DUFFIELD

(*See* p. 213.)

To secure reliable information for a village story any writer must examine much material, of which only a small part can be used with advantage. The following letters of Edmund Duffield are of value in that they reflect the spirit of his generation, but no place could conveniently be found for them in the narrative. These letters with other papers were discovered in an old cupboard when the " Manor House " was restored in 1903, and they are now in the possession of Lord Devonport. The last letter of the series, and probably the most interesting, was written just six weeks before the Young Pretender was defeated on Culloden Moor.

January 15th, 1741.

Brother Jack,

Parson Jackson, that divine Bacchanalian desires to know by me the reason of your not coming to his school as soon as you have dispatched your Affairs in the latin Monarchy with Mr. Birch, he asks why you are so immoderately stubborn ?

Yours Edm: Duffeild.

Medmenham,
July 14, 1741.

Dear Sir,

Your taking leave of the company in so abrupt a manner yesterday, put me under some apprehension that some uncommon reason for so doing had offerd itself, tis a concern Sir not only to me but the

Other gentlemen who fear they shall have the misfortune of being deprived of your agreeable Conversation for the future—if the imprudence of Mr. Jones has been the occasion of this, he intreats your pardon very humbly by my letter, if his rashness has made him inexcusable I hope the whole Society will not be looked upon as Offenders for the fault of an Individual, nor do I hope it will be a Sufferer by yr discontinuance of your Prescense—you have my thoughts upon the Matter.

Yours

EDMUND DUFFIELD.

MEDMENHAM,
Feb: 19*th*, 1743.

DEAR SIR,

the Contents of your last could not chuse but give me great pleasure for if Mr. Morton gets me settled in that College, as you inform Me, twill be no small advantage to be exempted from those expences which must necessarily attend one of the same station in Another House. I did intend to apply to Mr. Birch with regard to those matters, he might perchance have assisted me in some measure by apprizing Me of the Customs of the place as I am but just Come from School & an intire stranger to a University life. I saw my Brother Frank yesterday he was come from Thame where the Bleus at present make their Quarters, his stay was so short that I had not any Time to communicate my thoughts upon the subject to him, or make any interrogatories for a farther Information. we are all very well & join our Compliments & thanks for your Trouble.

EDMUND DUFFEILD.

OXON/*May* 26, 1743.

DEAR JACK,

My Buisness at College has hindered me from writing to you longer than I intended to have done, but seeing Mr. Fruor last night I was resolv'd to recommend myself in a few words. Your letter I received last Tuesday was fortnight the Account you gave concerning Mothers loosing her horse a little surprized me, but I hope the deasease was not contagious or that the Other Cattle will be Affected : I am glad to hear of that Unusual Calmness to be at home which you represented in your last. Tis allowable for young fellows by the licentiousness of the present Times, to whore and drink too, if they please, but Jemmys irregularities at home are certainly most unreasonable. but no more for that if he will persist

in this resolution of an inoffensive Behaviour at home—the past will be forgotten—& I hope your next will be a welcome messenger.

Yours

E. Duffeild.

forgive this Abruptness I was engaged at a friends room the same night.

July y^e 28th, 1745.

Recieved of Edmund Duffield the sum of thirteen shillings in full of all Demands and satisfaction for damage recieved by me I am as Deadman Witness my mark.

Thomas Burridge.

Edward Finch his mark.

Alban Hall, Oxon, *March* 3,
Anno 1746.

Dear Brother Jack,

This comes full of expectation of finding you recovered of your sickness of which you gave an account in your last. I have been somewhat out of order myself for this fortnight past which has obliged me to keep my room for some Time. I have nothing extraordinary to communicate but what you may have heard before very plentifully from all hands, that is, the success of the young Chevalier in the North, some say he is now in Lancashire, & tis incredible what a panic these reports have infused on the minds of some of our Oxford Tradesmen, indeed the colours in which vulgar prejudice has represented him, make this Prince to differ in a very little degree from a Monster, but to speak the truth, this young Mans abilities are previous to the most injudicious Brute in his Army. I had the following account of his personage from a Correspondent of mine who was an eye witness. the young Gentleman comes from the North & is a Commoner of Queens College. Ox: The Chevalier, says he, is tall, large Bones, vigorous & active, he, though naturally of a sanguine Temporament, is not very fleshy, his legs are well proportioned, his joints very strong, a lank belly finely chested with shoulders that seem able to support a Nation, his lineaments of his face are extremely beautifull, his head & forehead well proportioned, his mouth well shaped, a Caesarean nose, with eyes capable of prepossessing the most malicious Wigg, in his favour, in short the faculties of this prince are so numerous that to describe them all would swell my letter to too great a Bulk,

Yours

Edmund Duffeild.

g. JUDGMENT IN THE ACTION RELATING TO MEDMENHAM FERRY

(*See* p. 356.)

ROYAL COURTS OF JUSTICE,
Tuesday, 28th March 1899.

In the Court of Appeal.

Before :— The Lord Chancellor.
Lord Justice A. L. Smith, and
Lord Justice Collins.

The Attorney-General and Another *v.* Hudson.
Hudson *v.* Weyman.

Judgment.

LORD JUSTICE A. L. SMITH :—" This is an information by the Attorney-General at the relation of Mr. Kearley against the Defendant, Mr. Hudson, for having in the year 1897 obstructed a highway which leads from the village of Medmenham (which is situated upon the north side of the River Thames) down to the left bank of that river, and thereby obstructed persons passing and repassing thereon with carriages and horses, and for having obstructed a highway upon the south side of the river leading to a public-house called ' The Black Boy ' situated upon the highway leading from Henley-on-Thames to Maidenhead ; and the information alleges that the Defendant is the owner of an ancient ferry for horses, carriages, and foot passengers, with the right to take toll therefrom, which ferry crosses the river at the southern end of the first-mentioned road, and at the northern end of the second-mentioned road, and that it was the duty of the Defendant to ferry across the river, horses, carriages and foot passengers at a reasonable toll.

" The Defendant traverses each of these allegations, and denies that the ways or either of them are highways for horses and carriages, or that he possessed of an ancient ferry with the right of taking toll therefrom, and he asserts that he is under no liability to maintain and keep up the ferry.

" Although these three issues are separate and distinct, and must each be established by the Attorney-General, and although the evidence as to each must be separately considered, it is impossible for the tribunal which has to decide these issues not to be aware that when one of the issues is established by proof, it necessarily reflects upon the other two issues awaiting decision ; and so, if two of these issues be decided in favour of the Attorney-General, they necessarily throw light upon the third issue still left to be determined.

" I will proceed, first of all, with the issue : Has the Attorney-General established a highway for horses and carriages and for foot passengers on the north side of the River Thames, extending from Medmenham village down to the edge of the water at the left bank of the Thames at the ' Ferry Boat ' hotel ? It is conceded that the Defendant has obstructed this way. Before I go to the parol evidence, which has been called upon this issue, I will point out that in an indenture bearing date the 24th June 1795, and which forms part of the documents of title relating to the Defendant's estate, which he purchased on the 8th October 1895, I find that five different plots of land, now the property of the Defendant, are described as ' abutting on the road leading from Medmenham Church to the ferry,' as ' abutting on the road leading to Medmenham Ferry,' as ' abutting on the road leading from Medmenham Ferry aforesaid,' and as I find ' Medmenham Ferry ' mentioned in the title deeds of the Defendant's, commencing as far back as the year 1713, nearly two centuries ago—to which I shall more particularly hereafter refer—it certainly appears to me that by ancient documentary evidence the Attorney-General has given evidence which is entirely consistent with the parol evidence he has also called of this way being an ancient highway. But this issue by no means rests upon documentary evidence, for an overwhelming body of parol evidence, commencing with that of a witness named James Sparks, now in his 77th year, down to the year 1897, when the Defendant first set up the obstruction complained of, has been called,showing that this road from Medmenham village right down to the edge of the water of the Thames has been enjoyed and used by all Her Majesty's subjects desirous of passing and repassing along it with carriages and horses and on foot, and not even so much as an attempt has been made by the Defendant to show that this user has not taken place, or that anyone of Her Majesty's subjects passing and repassing over this road has during this period been interfered with, and, indeed, the evidence is all to the contrary. The Attorney-General established that this road had been repaired, as far as living evidence went, by the parish from the village of Medmenham close down to a wharf which faces the river at the foot of this road, though the wharf itself had been repaired and kept in good order by the Defendant's predecessors in title or their tenants, and not by the parish. The fact that the wharf had not been repaired by the parish was seized upon, and rightly so, by the learned Counsel for the Defendant, and he stoutly argued that this showed there was no highway down to the water's edge ; but the evidence was clear and uncontradicted that the wharf, well repaired and kept in good order as it was by the owner, was passed and repassed over by all Her Majesty's subjects who desired to do so with carriages, carts, horses,

and on foot down to the water's edge in the same way as the rest of the road leading from Medmenham village down to the wharf had been used, without let or hindrance to anyone ; and this evidence is uncontradicted.

" Now, what inference is to be drawn from this ? I can draw but one, and that is, that a highway for all Her Majesty's subjects passing and repassing with horses, carriages, and on foot, from Medmenham village down to the water's edge where the ferry-boat takes in passengers upon the left bank of the Thames, exists, and that this fact has been established. I can see no other explanation for this undoubted uninterrupted user.

" I now take the other end of the ' line of way ' between the right bank of the river, where the ferry boat plies, and the ' Black Boy ' public-house, which is situated upon the highway between Henley and Maidenhead. It is quite true that a horse or carriage or foot passenger disembarking from the boat when going south enters a meadow of about 12 acres in extent, called the Parish Meadow, and that there is no made road whatever across this meadow, and I will take it that the evidence shows that there never has been a made road across this meadow. But it is proved that this meadow, as far as living memory goes back, has been traversed by vehicular traffic, and horse and foot traffic, in a line from the boat to a point at a farm called Frogmill Farm, and thence on to the ' Black Boy ' public-house. From Frogmill Farm to the public-house the road is a made road and repaired by the parish.

" A point was made on behalf of the Defendant that the ruts caused by the vehicular traffic across this meadow extended to some 75 yards in width ; and therefore, said his learned Counsel, this is not consistent with there being a highway, for the public merely wandered over the meadow. It is, I think, familiar knowledge that across many Commons and Downs in England there are highways upon which there has never been placed a cartload of metal, either by the parish or by anyone else, and which way has from time to time become laterally extended and contracted as the exigencies of traffic required. This meadow is a meadow much exposed to flooding, and it is called the Parish Meadow ; why I do not know, for no evidence has been given thereon.

" It is proved by a large number of uncontradicted witnesses that as far as living memory goes back all Her Majesty's subjects, with carriages and horses, and on foot, who desired to pass and repass over this meadow from the boat to Frogmill Farm, and thence to the ' Black Boy ' public-house and back, have been accustomed to do so without let or hindrance.

" The Defendant sought to get rid of the effect of this uncontra-

dicted evidence by showing, as was the fact, that the parish repaired the road for carriages and horses from the ' Black Boy ' public-house down to Frogmill Farm, and no farther ; and that the tenant of the farm for a short distance between where the road was repaired by the parish, and where the unmetalled track across the field commenced, had put down at times some chalk and rubbish, and therefore, said he, this negatived the way being a highway. As to the character of the repair by the tenant of Frogmill Farm, who said that the parish repaired to ' the end of the Barn,' and that he did a piece himself, ' to where the wagons went over, we put chalk and stuff.' And a witness named Collins said it was a tolerably good road with a gate when you got to a sort of muddy place, but at times in winter it used to be flooded and that used to wash it, and sometimes the farmer for his own convenience would put in stones, but it was always a passable road. Although this evidence shows the condition of this particular piece of the road and what was done with it, still the question remains—What is the true inference to be drawn from this uninterrupted user for as long as living memory goes back over this road which has clearly been established? Is it that the way was before 1835 dedicated by the owner of the soil for all persons with horses, carriages, and on foot to pass to and fro from the Medmenham Ferry boat over it, which ferry, as before stated, I find to be existing as early as the year 1713 ? It seems to me that it may well be that a way across this parish field was dedicated to the public, unmade up as it was, as a grass road, the field oftentimes being under water.

" There was, too, a remarkable piece of evidence as to this way across the Parish Meadow being a highway, and it was this : Sharp, who had been tenant of the Frogmill Farm down to about two years ago, which farm included the meadow, and who remembered the place, as he said, for some 30 years back, spoke to the use made of the meadow by the public with carriages, saddle-horses, and carts, and as to how the public diverged from the track and thus cut up his grass. He was cross-examined by Mr. Jelf as to whether he complained about this to his landlord, Sir Gilbert East, a predecessor in title of the Defendant, and in re-examination it came out that Sir Gilbert, when he complained, told him that he did not think he could do anything in the matter, as it had been going on so many years ; and this, be it remembered, is said by a man who derives not one single sixpence from the ferry, which is the *causa causans* of the public traversing his field. Sir Gilbert was not called to contradict Sharp. What Sharp then did is also very significant. He did not lock the gate which existed at the Frogmill Farm, and which, if locked, would have cut off access to the meadow, nor did he otherwise obstruct the

way ; but, as he said, ' Before the spring of the year I used to put up hurdles to keep them in the track as nearly as I could,' that is, to limit the divergence of the public from the track as they crossed the meadow, a truly remarkable fact, if, as is now insisted upon by the Defendant, there never was a highway at all for carriages, horses, or on foot, over and across this meadow.

" In my judgment the uninterrupted user of the way from the ferry boat to the ' Black Boy ' public-house, which has been proved, is such that I find that the Attorney-General has established this second issue, as well as the first, and that a highway, both north and south of the ferry, has been proved to exist ; and that the Defendant obstructed this way is admitted.

" I now come to the third issue, which is : Whether the Defendant is possessed of the franchise of an ancient ferry, granted by the Crown, with the right attached thereto of taking a toll, to which franchise in consideration of the toll taken is attached the obligation upon the owner of the ferry of keeping it up. The Defendant asserts that no such grant can be, or should be, presumed, and that he is not possessed of any ferry ; and he gave evidence that search had been made for the grant of a ferry, and that it could not be found.

" As to this issue, I will begin with the Defendant's own title deeds, commencing in the 12th year of Queen Anne (27th May 1713). This is a disentailing deed by one Francis Duffield, of Medmenham, in the county of Bucks, by which a wharf-house situate in ' Medmenham in that county, and all that wharf in Medmenham adjoining the said wharf-house, and all that passage over the River Thames called Medmenham Ferry,' were conveyed for the purpose of barring an estate tail.

" Next comes a deed of the 18th George III., 65 years later (1778), by which Francis Duffield conveyed to John Morton for the purpose therein mentioned Medmenham Abbey, and also ' all his the said Francis Duffield's right and title whatever in the River Thames within the parish of Medmenham, and also his right of ferry and passage over the River Thames, at or near the village of Medmenham aforesaid, commonly called Medmenham Ferry, as the same now is and heretofore has been occupied or enjoyed by him the said Francis Duffield, and his ancestors.'

" I next find an indenture of 19 George III. (11th June 1779) whereby in order to secure a sum of £1,000, amongst other properties the Monastery or Abbey of Medmenham, and the wharf-house situated in Medmenham, and the wharf adjoining the same, and all that passage over the River Thames called Medmenham Ferry, were conveyed for the purposes above mentioned. About nine years later, in the year 1787, Elizabeth Morton, the widow and devisee of John

Morton, conveyed to Robert Scott the Abbey or Monastery of Medmenham, and all 'that messuage, tenement, or wharf-house situate in Medmenham, and all that wharf adjoining the last-mentioned messuage, and all that passage over the River Thames called Medmenham Ferry.' On the 24th June 1795, divers plots of land, as before stated, were conveyed to the Defendant's predecessors in title abutting upon the road 'leading from Medmenham Church to the ferry, on the road leading to Medmenham Ferry'; and last, but by no means least, about 100 years afterwards, comes the conveyance to the Defendant himself of the 8th October 1895, which, considering the position the Defendant is now taking up, is a very remarkable document. By this deed the Defendant purchased for the sum of £15,352 5*s*., to state it shortly, the properties north and south of the Thames, including Medmenham Abbey on the north, and Frogmill Farm and the 12-acre parish meadow on the south, which, as before stated, had once belonged to Sir Gilbert East. The following are the material parcels in this conveyance: Thirdly, all that piece of land containing 3a. 1r. 34p. 'bounded on the south by River Thames, and on the west by the road leading to Medmenham village, which piece of land formerly constituted the site of the ancient Abbey of Medmenham, and part of the orchard belonging thereto, together with all that messuage or tenement known as the Medmenham Abbey Hotel, but formerly as the Ferry Boat Hotel,' . . . 'together with all the estate and interest (if any) of the vendor in all that passage over the River Thames, at or near the Medmenham Abbey Hotel, known as Medmenham Ferry, and in the right of tolls for carrying passengers and vehicles, with or without horses, and other animals, over and across the said ferry, and in all other rights, franchises, and privileges appertaining to or connected with the said ferry.' An awkward form of conveyance indeed for a man to take in consideration of a money payment of £15,000 odd, if he be going to set up that when he purchased there was in fact no right to a ferry, and no right to a toll. Mr. Jelf suggested that these deeds might have been blunders of the conveyancers, but I cannot adopt this suggestion. These documents, in my opinion, play an important part in the consideration as to whether an ancient grant from the Crown of the franchise of a ferry with the right of taking a toll ought to be presumed.

"That the Medmenham Ferry existed as a ferry in the year 1713, in my judgment, has been proved; for in the deed of that date it is described as 'that passage over the River Thames called Medmenham Ferry.' I do not doubt that the word 'passage' ('passagium') is the proper legal term to describe and convey a ferry. See as to this in Pike *v*. Cassell to Meeson and Welsby, page 253. By the parol

evidence from the time of living memory down to the present, it has been proved that the ferry called ' Medmenham Ferry,' or ' The Ferry Boat Hotel Ferry,' has been used for all comers, whether with horses, carriages, carts, or on foot, without let or hindrance, upon the payment of a toll, which user is but a continuance, in my judgment, in more recent times of what is to be inferred from the ancient documents of the Defendant, and is in accord with the Defendant's title deed of 8th October 1895. The evidence as to the toll being taken and paid is very strong ; and, with the exception of the evidence of Mr. Cripps, senior, called by the Attorney-General, and who had lived in the neighbourhood, and had been Chairman of Quarter Sessions and of the County Council, and who, though accustomed to tip the boatman when he crossed in the ferry, did not consider that he was paying a toll, no evidence was offered by the Defendant to contradict the numerous witnesses who deposed to the toll being paid by the persons crossing and recrossing the ferry ; and proof was also given by witnesses that the toll which was taken and paid was 1*d*. for a foot passenger, 3*d*. for a saddle-horse, and 6*d*. for a cart or carriage. It was proved, in my judgment, that from the time of living memory this ferry consisted of a boat for the carriage of carts, carriages, and saddle-horses, and alongside of it was a punt for the conveyance of foot passengers.

" If the case had rested here, could it have been denied that the documents, together with the long and uninterrupted user, coupled with the payment of toll, which has been proved, were cogent evidence to establish the existence of an ancient legal ferry, and that the Court upon such evidence ought to presume a lost grant ? As was said by Lord Selborne in the Saltash Case, in the House of Lords, 7 Appeal Cases, at page 639 : ' An open and uninterrupted enjoyment from time immemorial, under a claim of right, seems to me to be all that is necessary for a presumption that it had such an origin as would establish the right if a lawful origin was reasonably possible in law. That in such a case a lawful origin ought to be presumed, if it is reasonably possible, is established by many authorities.' I could cite many, but the above suffices as to when a lost grant ought to be presumed by the Court.

" A point was made by Mr. Jelf on behalf of the Defendant, which I will now deal with, for in my judgment it was the only point really open to him to make, and before I do so I must in particular state that the evidence is clear that the Medmenham Ferry, otherwise called ' the Ferry at the Ferry House Hotel,' was in existence prior to the year 1851, and that there was, prior to that year, a ferry boat which crossed the river at a point about 250 yards above the Medmenham Ferry.

" The evidence shows that prior to that date this upper ferry, as I will call it, was used for the ferrying over the tow horses towing barges up stream, and that in the year 1851 this upper ferry was abandoned by the Conservators of the Upper Thames. Mr. Jelf says, and with truth, that from the time of James I the navigation of the Thames has been regulated by Statute, and I find, from the argument of Counsel for the Defendant in the case of Ball *v.* Herbert, 3 Durnford and East, page 253, which is a case which dealt with tow-paths and their origin, that the first Statute relating to the Thames is 3 James I, c. 20 (1605). This Statute is silent as to towing; but the next Statute, 21 James I (1623), made the Thames navigable from Bercot to Oxford, and the Statute gave a right of towing. Subsequent Statutes were cited by Mr. Jelf, though I find nothing material to what I have in hand in them: but in the last Act he cited, the Conservancy Act of 1897 or 1893—I am not sure about that date, but I rather think it was 1892, at all events it was the last Conservancy Act[1]—by section 63 power is given to the Conservators to erect ferries for the purpose of navigation. I think that it is highly probable, if not certain, that the Conservators of the Thames have set up ferries where the towing-path changes from one bank of the river to the other, in order to foster the navigation and to accommodate the horses towing barges up stream; and the inference I draw from the evidence in this case is, that this was what was done as regards the upper ferry, about 250 yards up stream above the Medmenham Ferry, where the tow-path changes from one side of the river to the other, and by which ferry the upstream towing horses were ferried over. That there are many of these changes of tow-paths from one bank of the river to the other is well known, and it is not, therefore, necessary to cite Lord Kenyon, at page 261 in Ball *v.* Herbert, to establish this, though the Lord Chief Justice states the fact as being well known.

" Now, why am I to assume, as Mr. Jelf invites me to do, that the Medmenham Ferry, or ' Ferry Boat ' Hotel Ferry, was a Conservancy ferry, and not an ancient legal ferry, when I find the Conservators had a ferry 250 yards higher up for their barge-horses towing barges up stream, and which was used for the purpose, and not for the general public? I will assume that this upper ferry was made by the Conservancy for navigation purposes, made as it was at the place where the right bank tow-path changed over to the left bank of the river. If Mr. Jelf could have shown, which he tried hard to do, that prior to 1851, when a license was given by the Upper Thames Navigation Commissioners to Mr. Murray, the owner of the ' Ferry Boat ' Hotel Ferry, as hereinafter appears,

[1] The Thames Conservancy Act, 1894.

the only ferry then existing was the upper ferry, or, indeed, only the lower ferry, I might have agreed with his argument, and have thought that the true inference might be that the ferry now in debate was a Conservancy ferry, and not an ancient franchise granted by the Crown ; but upon this question of fact he absolutely failed, for before 1851 it is perfectly clear upon the evidence that there existed, not only the Conservancy ferry 250 yards above the Medmenham, or ' Ferry Boat ' Hotel Ferry, but that the Medmenham Ferry also existed.

" The license given upon the 4th October 1851 was this : ' General Meeting of the Commissioners, held at the Town Hall, Windsor, on Saturday, the 4th day of October 1851, being the first Saturday after the 29th day of September in that year. The General Committee recommend that permission be given to Mr. Murray, of Danesfield, to amalgamate the two ferries at Medmenham or to substitute a new one instead of the two, such amalgamation or substitution, as the case may be, to be done at the cost of Mr. Murray and under the supervision of the general surveyor.' This document clearly recognises the existence of the two ferries I have above mentioned. What was at this time done appears to be this :— The upper ferry was abandoned and dismantled. The posts belonging thereto, together with a chain which had stretched across the river from post to post, were taken down and were apparently re-erected at the old Medmenham, or ' Ferry Boat ' Hotel Ferry, and I believe remain there to the present day. Prior to this shifting of the posts and chains, it would seem that the Medmenham Ferry was worked with a pole in conjunction with a rope, which was used for the boat which ferried the horses, carts, and carriages over, and the punt was punted across by a pole. I cannot see how, upon these facts, it should be presumed that the ferry now in question is a Conservancy ferry and not an ancient ferry granted in olden time to the predecessor in title of the Defendant, with the right to take toll therefrom.

" In my judgment, a lost grant should be presumed in favour of a franchise, and I have no difficulty whatever in making that presumption. If this upper ferry had been the ferry spoken of in the ancient deeds, as suggested by the Defendant, I asked : Where would a person who crossed that ferry going northwards in a carriage, if he ever went, go to, and how would a person in a carriage going southward from Medmenham village ever get to this ferry where it adjoins this left bank of the river ? I heard no answer to this in argument.

" I have nothing more to add, excepting to say that, in my opinion, the Attorney-General has succeeded on such issue, and that the Defendant is under obligation to maintain the ancient ferry at

Medmenham, and that the Judgment of Mr. Justice Day should be affirmed, and that the injunction he has granted should be maintained, and that this appeal must be dismissed, with costs.

"The second action is in reality concluded by this Judgment, and the appeal therein will be dismissed, with costs."

The Lord Chancellor agrees in this Judgment.

Lord Justice Collins :—"I entirely agree with the Judgment which has just been read."

Mr. Rawlinson :—"Might I ask your Lordships whether the costs of the shorthand notes might be allowed? The question turned upon the evidence, and both sides had to use the shorthand notes of very great length, and there was no other means of bringing the evidence before your Lordships."

Lord Justice A. L. Smith :—"This is an exceptional case. There were no notes of my brother Day at all, and it would have been impossible to have heard the appeal without the shorthand notes. There must be an order in this case, as an exception, that the shorthand notes be allowed."

Extract from the Proceedings of the Commons Preservation Society during the year 1897–98.

AUTHORITIES FOR HISTORY OF MEDMENHAM

"And it came to pass that . . . the chief priests and the scribes came upon him, with the elders, and spake unto him, saying, Tell us, by what authority doest thou these things? or who is he that gave thee this authority? And he answered and said . . ."

Ch. xx., vv. 1–3

LUKE—THE BELOVED PHYSICIAN
(*fl.* 60 A.D.)

AUTHORITIES FOR HISTORY OF MEDMENHAM

ALLCROFT, ARTHUR HADRIAN.
Earthwork of England, Prehistoric, Roman, Saxon, Danish, Norman, and Mediæval. (1908.)

ANCIENT DEEDS (Public Record Office).
Original deeds, many from private muniments and from muniments of religious houses, kept among the records of the Exchequer (King's Remembrancer, Treasury of Receipt, Augmentation Office), the Chancery, and the Duchy of Lancaster. Use has been made of printed and MS. catalogues.

ASSOCIATION OATH ROLL (Petty Bag).
The signatures of all those who in 1696 bound themselves into a solemn Association for defending the person and government of William III (Petty Bag, Association Oath R. 16, Section 3, has the signatures for Medmenham).

AUGMENTATION OFFICE RECORDS.
Records of various courts set up under Henry VIII to control the Crown revenues, then greatly augmented by the suppression of monasteries and chantries. Reference has been made to Certificates of Chantries and Colleges, Particulars of Grants and Leases, original Deeds of Surrender (there is none for Medmenham), and other records.

BERKSHIRE, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND OXFORDSHIRE ARCHÆOLOGICAL JOURNAL.
(Ed. Rev. P. H. Ditchfield); issued in connection with the Berkshire Archæological Society since 1895.

BORLASE, WILLIAM COPELAND, M.P., Vice-President of the Society of Antiquaries.
Borlase of Borlase. (1888.)

BRITISH MUSEUM CHARTERS AND MSS.
The charters are original deeds, court rolls, etc., either belonging to the collections acquired by the Museum as a whole or to purchases and bequests made subsequently. Use has also been made of certain special MSS., e.g. Additional MS. 22190 (title deeds of Richard Lord Lovelace); Stowe MS. 806 (*Posse Comitatus* of Buckinghamshire in 1798).

CALENDARS TO CLOSE ROLLS.

(Record Commission) 1204–1227.
(Record Office) 1227–1392.

Letters and writs, issued out of Chancery under the Great Seal, giving instructions to individual ministers, servants or subjects of the king.

CALENDARS TO PATENT ROLLS.

(Record Commission) 1201–1216.
(Record Office) 1216–1509.
(Lansdowne MS. 221) 1546–1603.

Continued in Letters and Papers of Henry VIII, q.v.

Letters and writs, issued out of Chancery under the Great Seal and giving the instructions of the Crown in an open (or "patent") form, directed to everyone into whose hands they should come.

CAMDEN, WILLIAM.

Britannia; sive florentissimorum regnorum Angliae, Scotiae, Hiberniae, et insularum adjacentium ex intima antiquitate chorographica descriptio.

First published in 1586. The best modern editions are those by E. Gibson (1772), and R. Gough (1789).

CENSUS OF 1851.

Being the original returns from the officer for the Marlow district, which then included Medmenham. These are open for inspection at the Public Record Office upon payment of a fee.

COLE MSS.

The collection of the Reverend William Cole (*d.* 1782) relating very largely to Buckinghamshire and bequeathed by Cole to the British Museum. Particular use has been made of Add. MS. 5827, and Cole's notes in the "History of Mitred Abbeys," compiled by Browne Willis.

DEEDS ENROLLED

In Chancery (on the Close Rolls); in the Court of Common Pleas (on the De Banco Rolls till Easter 25 Eliz., thereafter on the Recovery Rolls); and in the Court of King's Bench (on the Coram Rege Rolls before 1702, and thereafter on the Plea Rolls).

These are enrolments of agreements between private persons often in the nature of marriage settlements, or deeds to explain the uses of a conveyance by Fine and Recovery (see Feet of Fines below).

DODSWORTH AND DUGDALE: *MONASTICON ANGLICANUM.*

Collections for a history of English monasteries compiled by Roger Dodsworth (*d.* 1654) and expanded and edited by his friend, Sir William Dugdale. The best account of Medmenham Abbey appears in the edition of 1817–30 (ed. Caley, Ellis and Bandinel), vol. V, pp. 684–685.

DOMESDAY BOOK,

seu Liber Censualis Wilhelmi Primi Regis Angliae (ed. A. Farley, 1783; issued by Record Commission, 1816). Vol. I, f. 150_b, contains Medmenham.

The great survey ordered by William I in the Witan held at Gloucester in the winter of 1085, and completed by July 1086.

EDWARDIAN INVENTORIES OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE (ed. F. C. Eeles) Alcuin Club Tracts No. 9. (1899.)

These are the inventories of church goods, compiled with a view to seizing for the Crown all but the minimum of ornaments prescribed by the Second Prayer Book (1552).

ESCHEATORS' ACCOUNTS.

These are detailed accounts of the issues, outgoings and profits from land which fell (escheated) into the king's hands or from the goods of outlaws, felons, etc., forfeit to the Crown. The Buckinghamshire accounts for the late 15th century have been specially examined. Before 17 Edw. II similar accounts were also enrolled on the Pipe Rolls (see below).

FEET OF FINES

i.e. the foot or base of a triplicate indenture which formed a final concord between the parties in an actual plea of land, and was early developed by a legal fiction into a common form for conveying land, being supplemented later by the Common Recovery with an explanatory deed (see above under Deeds Enrolled). Use has been made of Hunter's *Fines sive Pedes Finium* (Record Commission) which contains Buckinghamshire Fines 1195-1214, *Feet of Fines* 1182–1199 (Pipe Roll Society), the original Bucks Feet of Fines 1199–1509 and Mixed Counties Fines 1450–1500, and the MS. Calendars at the Public Record Office for various dates after 1509.

FEUDAL AIDS (1284–1428).

Returns of knights' fees and their tenants made for the purposes of the "aids" which were due under the Feudal System upon certain special occasions, e.g. the marriage of the king's daughter

or the knighting of his eldest son. Returns for Medmenham were made in 1284–6, 1302–3, and 1316, and are printed in vol. I. of *Inquisitions relating to Feudal Aids* (Public Record Office).

HUNDRED ROLLS.
Inquisitions as to the infringement of the King's rights by private individuals, or unjust exactions made by his local officers. The Buckinghamshire returns for 39 Hen. III and 4 Edw. I printed in *Rotuli Hundredorum* (Record Commission) have been used.

HUNTER, SIR ROBERT, J.P.
The Preservation of Open Spaces, and of Footpaths, and other Rights of Way. (1902.)

INQUISITIONS AD QUOD DAMNUM.
Inquiries by jury as to whether a proposed grant of a fair etc. or licence to alienate land in mortmain would be prejudicial to the king and others. Use has been made of the Public Record Office Calendars from Henry III to Richard III. (*Lists and Indices XVII* and *XXII.*)

INQUISITIONS POST MORTEM.
Inquisitions made by the oath of local jurors from the time of Henry III until the reign of Charles I as to the lands held of the king by his tenants-in-chief at their death. Return was made of the date of the tenant's death, the particulars of the land he held, and the name and age of his heir.

JACKMAN, W. T.
The Development of Transportation in Modern England. (1916.) 2 vols.

LANGLEY, THOMAS.
History and Antiquities of the Hundred of Desborough. (1797.)

LIBER NIGER SCACCARII (ed. Hearne, 1728).
This is the Liber Niger Parvus of the Exchequer and contains (*inter alia*) the *cartae* of 1166, which were returns from the barons showing what number of knights they had enfeoffed and what service was due from each.

LIBER RUBEUS SCACCARII
(ed. Hall) Rolls Series, containing the *cartae* of 1166 and several later returns similar in character.

LINCOLN DIOCESAN ARCHIVES.
Including the Episcopal Registers (published and unpublished).

LIPSCOMB, GEO.

History and Antiquities of the County of Buckingham.
The account of Medmenham occurs at vol. III (1847), pp. 611–618.

MEDMENHAM CLUB.

The chief accounts or allusions occur in—

Charles Johnston.	*Chrysal* (1763), vol. III, pp. 231–80.
Charles Churchill.	*Poems.* Particularly " The Conference " (1763) and " The Candidate " (1764).
Paul Whitehead.	*Poems*, ed. Captain E. Thompson ; particularly Thompson's account in his introduction, p. xxxii.
John Almon.	*Memoirs and Correspondence of John Wilkes.*

MEDMENHAM PARISH RECORDS, viz.

Parish Registers (1654–1924) and Register Transcripts (beg. 1575).
Tithe Roll (Surveys 1802, 1842 ; also occasional notes).
Overseers' Proceedings (1693–1733, 1773–1801, 1814–1843).
Churchwardens' Accounts (1747–1855).
Miscellaneous papers.

MEMORANDA ROLLS OF THE EXCHEQUER.

Containing the business prepared by " remembrancers " for the Barons of the Exchequer. Use has been made of the memoranda of the Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer (Hen. III–Geo. II) as indexed by Edward Jones (1793–95), and of other rolls for specific points.

MINISTERS' ACCOUNTS.

The accounts rendered to the Crown or private individuals by the " ministers " or servants (e.g. bailiffs) responsible for administering manors, lands or other properties. There are no early accounts for Medmenham at the Public Record Office ; but use has been made of the account of the bailiff of Margaret Countess of Salisbury for Medmenham etc. (Min. Acct. Ser. 2, Hen. VII, 28).

OXFORD UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES.

Including the Digby Rawlinson and Brown Willis manuscripts, Hearne's collections and other muniments. This collection includes several deeds concerning Wittington and Harleyford. Use has also been made of the *Oxfordshire Archdeaconry Papers*, with terriers, transcripts, wills, and reports of visitations filed at the Bodleian Library.

PARLIAMENT ROLLS.

Use has been made of *Rotuli Parliamentorum* (1278–1503) printed by order of the House of Lords about 1783. This contains most of the proceedings of Parliament and many parliamentary petitions and pleadings.

PASSAGES FROM THE DIARIES OF MRS. PHILIP LYBBE POWYS OF HARDWICK HOUSE, OXON, 1756–1808. (Ed. E. J. Climenson, 1899.)

PIPE ROLLS.

The great rolls of the Exchequer compiled by the Clerk of the Pipe and showing what the sheriff of each county owed and paid as collector of the Crown revenues. Use has been made of the printed rolls, viz., 31 Hen. I (Rec. Com.), 2–4 Hen. II (Rec. Com.), 5–33 Hen. II (Pipe Roll Soc.), and the Chancellor's Roll for 3 John (Rec. Com.) ; also of certain original rolls for specific purposes.

PLEAS.

The following calendars have been used for proceedings in the various Royal Courts :—

Placitorum Abbreviatio (Record Commission).

Curia Regis Rolls, temp. Richard I and John (Record Commission, Record Office, and Pipe Roll Society).

Boyd's MS. Indices to Plea Rolls.

Plantagenet Harrison's MS. Indices to Plea Rolls.

Agarde's MS. Indices to Plea Rolls for Buckinghamshire.

RECORDS OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE,

or papers on the history and antiquities of the county issued by the Archæological and Architectural Society for Buckinghamshire, 1854–1871.

ROUND, J. R.

Feudal England : Historical Studies on the XIth and XIIth Centuries. (1909.)

Rotuli de Dominabus : Introduction to.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON HISTORICAL MONUMENTS.

Inventory of Historical Monuments in Buckinghamshire.

Medmenham occurs at vol. I (South Bucks), p. 255.

SCOTT-MURRAY FAMILY PAPERS.

These records, compiled by Charles R. S. Scott-Murray in three manuscript volumes, contain also miscellaneous

information. Several passages refer to the Duffield family. The books are now in the possession of his grandson, Francis Joseph Scott-Murray.

SHEEHAN, J. J.
History and Topography of the County of Buckingham (1862).

STATE PAPERS.
The documents formerly kept in the State Paper Office and emanating from the offices of the Secretaries of State for the Foreign, Colonial and Home Departments. Use has been made of :—
Brewer's *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII*, a detailed calendar not only of the State Papers but also of other records (such as Patent Rolls) relating to the reign of Henry VIII ; and printed *Calendars of State Papers Domestic*, i.e. of papers emanating from the Home Department, from 1547 to 1681, 1689 to 1696, and 1702.

SUBSIDIES.
Accounts and assessments for taxes of various kinds, in some instances giving the names of individuals assessed and the amounts they paid. Use has been made of :—
(*a*) Lay Subsidies 79/216 (35 Eliz.), 79/279 (21–2 Jas. I).
(*b*) Clerical Subsidies for various dates.
(*c*) *Nonarum Inquisitiones* (14–15 Edw. III). (Record Commission.)
Showing variations in the valuation of benefices between 1291 and 14 Edw. III, and names of persons taxed for a ninth or fifteenth of the corn, wool and lambs in each parish. Medmenham occurs at p. 334 of the returns published by the Record Commission.
(*d*) *Taxation of Pope Nicholas*. (Record Commission.)
The valuation of all ecclesiastical benefices made by command of Edward I, to whom Pope Nicholas IV had granted the tenths due from the clergy for an expedition to the Holy Land. The Pope's grant was dated 1288, and the valuation was completed in 1291.
(*e*) *Valor Ecclesiasticus*. (Record Commission.)
The new valuation of ecclesiastical benefices made 26 Henry VIII, when the first-fruits and tenths, formerly due to the Pope, were by Act of Parliament granted to the King. Use has been made of the Abstract of the Valor published by the Record Commission ; the valuation of Medmenham occurs in vol. IV.

LIST OF AUTHORITIES

SURVEYS.

The survey of Medmenham Abbey at the Dissolution occurs in Miscellaneous Book (Augmentation Office) 406. The valor of Medmenham Manor temp. Hen. VI. is in Rentals & Surveys P.R.O. Roll 33.

TESTA DE NEVILL.

Transcripts of returns relating to carucage, knights' fees, etc., 1198–1250. Use has been made of the *Book of Fees* (Record Office), vols. I–II.

THAMES COMMISSIONERS.

Agreements, Acts of Parliament, and Proceedings of the Commissioners (1751–1857).

THAMES CONSERVANCY.

Correspondence, Acts of Parliament, and proceedings relating to the navigation of the river (1857–1920).

WESTMINSTER ABBEY MUNIMENTS.

Those referring to Medmenham have a dual source. Some originally belonged to the papers of Sir Reginald Bray. Some belonged to the archives of Hurley Priory, which was granted to the Abbey by Henry VIII, in exchange for the manors of Hyde etc. in Westminster, and have been calendared by the late Rev. E. T. Wethered in *Hurley and the Middle Ages*. (1898.)

WILLIS, BROWN.

History of Buckinghamshire (1718).
History of Abbies (1719). The account of Medmenham occurs at vol. II, p. 29.

WILLS.

A list of Medmenham wills is appended. The list is as exhaustive as it is possible to make it from the calendars to Archdeaconry of Buckinghamshire wills. It also includes those wills of notable persons connected with Medmenham, for which special search has been made in other courts.

Some of the material from these sources has not been published in the present volume because it is of a statistical nature, and may for that reason find a more fitting place in a future publication on the Parish Registers of Medmenham.

The maps and plans included in this book are contributed by Mr. A. G. R. Mackenzie, F.R.I.B.A., Lower Wood End House, Medmenham.

INCUMBENTS OF MEDMENHAM

A.D. 650 ABOUT this time a church was first founded at Medmenham, but no list of Rectors was preserved until after 1200 A.D., when general registration was first adopted. Soon after that time the benefice of Medmenham became a Vicarage.

	VICAR.	PATRON.	INSTITUTED.	RESIGNED OR EXCHANGED.
1190	Geoffrey Gibewin (*Rector*)	Walter de Bolebec	Not known.	
222	John de Hornel (*Chaplain*)	The Abbot and Convent of Medmenham	The fourteenth year of Bishop Hugh deWelles(1222–3).	
	Walter the Priest	The Abbot and Convent of Medmenham	Not known	Died 1227.
1239	Thomas de Wycumb (*Chaplain*)	The Abbot and Convent of Medmenham	At Tinghurst, 20th May 1239.	
1245	Richard de Merlaue (*Chaplain*)	The Abbot and Convent of Medmenham	In the eleventh year of Bishop Grosseteste (1245–6).	
1272	Adam de Lechton (*Chaplain*)	The Abbot and Convent of Wouburn, by the consent of the whole Convent of Medmenham,its seat being vacant	15th October 1272.	
	Sir Thomas Coleman *alias* de Leython	The Abbot and Convent of Medmenham	Not known	Died 1332–3.
1333	Thomas Ruyland (*Priest*)	John Abbot and the Convent of Medmenham	At Tyngehurst, 23rd November 1333.	
1349	Sir John de Wengraue (*Priest*)	The Abbot and Convent of Medmenham	At Botelsford, 29th May 1349.	
1349	Roger Ibote of Oke (*Deacon*)	The Abbot and Convent of Medmenham	At Stow Park, 1st November 1349	r. 1355.

	VICAR.	PATRON.	INSTITUTED.	RESIGNED OR EXCHANGED.
1355	Sir Ralf de Luda de Wittenham (*Priest*)	The Abbot and Convent of Medmenham	At Tyngehurst, 31st March 1355.	
1360	Sir Robert de Twyford of Northluffenham (*Priest*)	The Abbot and Convent of Medmenham	At the Old Temple, London, 5th February 1360.	r. 1365.
1365	Sir Robert de Braye Monk of Medmenham (*Priest*)	The Abbot and Convent of Medmenham	At Lidyngton 27th June 1365.	
	Sir Robert Rothale (*Priest*)	The Abbot and Convent of Medmenham	Not known	ex. 1389.
1389	Sir John Gale, Vicar of Pydinghe, Chichester Diocese	The Abbot and Convent of Medmenham	By permission of the Bishop of Lincoln to the Bishop or Vicar-General of Chichester dated 18th November 1389 at Lidyngton. Certificate of institution by the guardian of the spiritualities of the bishopric of Chichester, the See being vacant, dated at Lewes, 7th December 1389. On 21st December, at Lidyngton, Robert Drewe, proctor of John Gale, exhibited the certificate.	r. 1423.
1395	Sir Roger Beltham (*Chaplain*)	The Abbot and Convent of Medmenham	At Sleford, 27th August 1395.	

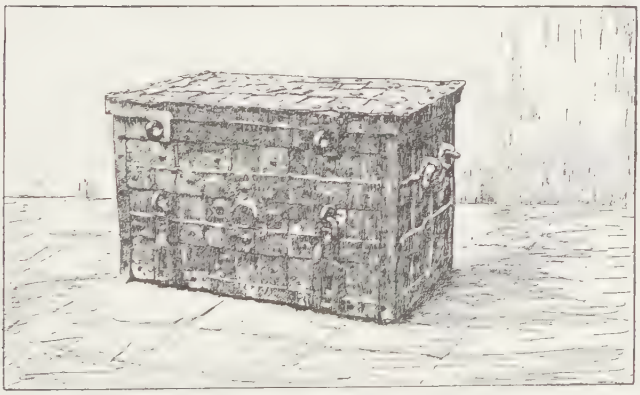
	VICAR.	PATRON.	INSTITUTED.	RESIGNED OR EXCHANGED.
1405	Sir Thomas Attehythe (*Priest*)	The Abbot and Convent of Medmenham	At Lidyngton, 8th January 1405	r. 1423.
1423	Sir Thomas Wryght (*Priest*)	The Abbot and Convent of Medmenham	Place not known, 3rd August 1423.	
	Sir John Der	The Abbot and Convent of Medmenham	Not known	r. 1432.
1432	Sir John Croftes (*Priest*)	The Abbot and Convent of Medmenham	At Lidyngton, 15th December 1432.	
1435	Sir John Brigge (*Priest*)	The Bishop of Lincoln (by Lapse)	At Bugden, 5th June 1435, in the person of Master William Simond, LL.B., his proctor	Exchanged for Cotspool, Bedfordshire, with :
1440	Sir William Honyburne, vicar of Pottesgrove, Lincoln Diocese.	The Abbot and Convent of Medmenham	At Blankney, 13th October 1440.	r. 1454.
1454	Sir Robert Draper (*Chaplain*)	The Abbot and Convent of Medmenham	At London, 24th May 1454	Exchanged 1455 for Rectory of Baldock, Diocese of Lincoln, with :
1455	Sir John Whitingdon, Rector of Baldok, Lincoln Diocese.	The Abbot and Convent of Medmenham	At Woubourne, 12th October 1455.	
1468	Sir Richard Upton (*Priest*)	The Bishop of Lincoln (by Lapse)	At Woubourne, 11th July 1468	r. 1472.
1472	Sir William Walshe (*Priest*)	The Abbot and Convent of Medmenham	At Lincoln, 15th July 1472	r. 1475.
1475	Sir John Walter, LL.B.	The Abbot and Convent of Medmanham	At London 9th November 1475.	

	VICAR.	PATRON.	INSTITUTED.	RESIGNED OR EXCHANGED.
1496	SirWilliam Sarlek (*Priest*)	The Abbot and Convent of Medmenham	At Lincoln, 23rd April 1496, in the person of Thomas Bowdon, literate, his proctor	r. early in 1498.
1498	Sir Michael Mabson (*Priest*)	The Abbot and Convent of Medmenham	At Oxford, 1st March 1498, in the person of Robert Lathe, literate, his proctor	Sir Michael resigned the benefice within a few days of his Institution.
1498	Sir Henry Doket (*Priest*)	The Abbot and Convent of Medmenham	At Wycomb, 14th March 1498.	
1499	Sir Henry Bee (*Priest*)	The Abbot and Convent of Medmenham	At the Old Temple, London, 18th April 1499.	
1526	Sir Roger Fodergill (*Chaplain*)	The Abbot and Convent of Medmenham	At Lidington, 4th December 1526.	
1563	Thomas Moxton (*Clerk*)	James Duffield	25th March 1563–4.	
1583	George Hyde, B.A. (*Clerk*)	James Duffield, Esquire	1st February 1583.	
1592	Robert Lewin, M.A. *Evangelii Christi predicator*	Francis Duffeilde, Esq., of Medmenham, co. Buckingham	At Buckden, 7th November 1592.	
1618	Hugh Pike (*Clerk*)	The heirs of Francis Duffield	4th October 1618	Hugh Pike vacatedthe benefice in 1624, on his induction into the Rectory of Wemworthy,co. Devon.

	VICAR.	PATRON.	INSTITUTED.	RESIGNED OR EXCHANGED.
1624	Joel Barnard (*Clerk*)	Alice Duffield of Medmenham, co. Buckingham, widow.	November 1624, by Mr. Boswell, commissary.	
1651	Thomas Brookes	Knightley Duffield, Esq., at that time possessed the advowson	About 1651	Probably an Independent Minister expelled 1661.
1661	John Gilbert (*Clerk*)	Knightley Duffield, Esq.	28th January 1661	Deprived for not taking the Oaths 1690
1690	David Dicconson	Francis Duffield, Esq.	31st July 1690.	
1716	James Harrison, B.A.	Francis Duffield, Esq.	18th December 1716.	
1741	John Frewer, M.A.	Francis Duffield of Medmenham, Esq.	21st December 1741	r. 1749.
1749	Edmund Duffield (*Clerk*)	Francis Duffield, Esq.	11th April 1749.	
1759	Timothy Shaw (*Clerk*)	John Dashwood King, Esq. (*As Trustee see p.* 227)	8th June 1759	r. 1781.
1761	John Cleobury, M.A. (*Clerk*)	Elizabeth Morton of Danesfield, co. of Buckingham, widow in full right	22nd March 1781.	
1801	Richard Hunt, M.A. (*Clerk*)	Robert Scott, Esq., of Danesfield in the Parish of Medmenham, Esq. in full right.	24th February 1801.	
1837	Thomas Arthur Powys, M.A.	Charles Scott Murray Esq., of Danesfield, co. Buckingham, Esq. in full right	23rd February 1837	r. 1852.
1852	William Wright	Augusta Eliza Murray	28th May 1852	r. 1855.

	VICAR.	PATRON.	INSTITUTED.	RESIGNED OR EXCHANGED.
1855	Frederick William Harris	University of Oxford *pro hac vice*	28th April 1855.	
1872	Walter Hill	University of Oxford *pro hac vice*	12th July 1872	r. 1898.
1898	Basil Staunton Batty	Robert William Hudson, Esq., of Danesfield	9th December 1898	r. 1906.
1907	Stephen Miller Winter	Robert William Hudson, Esq., of Danesfield	At Medmenham, 30th January 1907	r. 1914.
1915	Arthur Henry Plaisted	Mrs. Helen Stewart Hornby Lewis, of Danesfield	At Medmenham, 29th June 1915.	

Table No. IX.



THE CHURCH CHEST (*see* p. 259)

GLOSSARY

Asses in law (p. 407). L. *satis* = enough. Enough, here of land, to discharge any obligation with which the estate was burdened (*cf.* the modern "assets").

Assize, Grand (p. 163). L. *assidere* = to sit together. Trial by the oath of twelve knights, introduced in the twelfth century. The twelve were chosen in the presence of the justices by four knights, selected by the sheriff, any tendency of the sheriff to partiality being thus restricted. The twelve had to give a unanimous answer to questions of fact put to them. The defendant (here the Abbot) could choose whether trial should be by the assize or by battle. The fifteenth-century writer (*see* p. 377) hints that the recognitors had given their verdict in favour of the Abbot, when the Chief Justice took his seat and confused them by putting a further question. The existing record shows that they swore to the facts as narrated in the text, and then the Chief Justice delayed judgment until the King himself should come, and to allow the parties time to come to an agreement. The fifteenth-century writer carefully refrains from mentioning the agreement, of which we have record (p. 164).

Assize, rents of (p. 36). Rents of a fixed or settled amount, not changeable at the lord's will.

Bordar (p. 22). A husbandman of more servile condition than the villein.

Deforciant (pp. 73 etc.). L. *deforcians* = one who withholds legal possession. The defendant in the fictitious action known as a final concord, and thus usually the person parting with the land (*see* p. 429).

Demesne (pp. 22 etc.). L. *dominicum* = lordship. Generally the land kept by the lord of the manor in his own occupation, for the maintenance of himself and his household; occasionally applied to the lands held by his copyholders, as distinct from freeholds.

Escheat (pp. 55 etc.). O.F. *eschoir* = to fall, happen. A "casual" descent, either of land to the lord of a manor by reason of the felony of a tenant, or the failure of the tenant's heirs; or of the manor itself, for similar reasons, to the overlord, who is the king, if the manor is held in chief as Medmenham was.

Fee simple (p. 48). Tenure whereby the tenant holds his lands to himself and his heirs for ever.

Hanaper (p. 200). O.F. *hanapier* = a case for a *hanap* or goblet. The department of Chancery into which were paid the fees for sealing and enrolling certain documents.

Heriot (p. 314). O.E. *here* = army and *ȝeatwa* = equipment. The best live beast payable to the lord of a manor upon the death of the tenant, and usually arising from copyholds only; originating in the return of the dead man's horse and military equipment to his lord.

Impediant (pp. 165 etc.). L. *impediens* = a hinderer. Another style of defendant in the conveyance by final concord (*see* p. 429).

Livery (p. 205). L. *liberatio* = delivery. Delivery of actual possession, or seisin, of lands to one who has acquired by inheritance, purchase, or grant. Hence (p. 205) the fine paid to the king upon the heir's succession to land held in chief. Seisin is often delivered by the gift of a sod of land, or the key or "ring" of the door, as when the parson takes possession of the temporalities of his church at induction.

Oyer and terminer, commission of (p. 176, etc.). Anglo-Fr. = to hear and determine. A writ directed to the king's judges or other notable persons to hear and determine indictments on specified offences. Thence comes the present-day comprehensive commission to judges on circuit to try all offences of certain character, e.g. treasons, murders, felonies.

Pannage (p. 54). L. *pascere* = to feed. The feeding of hogs in the lord's woods, and hence the money paid for permission to feed hogs.

Petty serjeanty (p. 39). O.F. *petit serjantie* = a small service. Tenure of land from the king by rendering some small equipment (e.g. an arrow) towards war, which in effect frequently became a small rent in money.

Procurations (p. 187). Yearly payments by a parish priest to the archdeacon or bishop in commutation of their former right to hospitality for themselves and their retinues, when making visitations.

Querent (pp. 73 etc.). L. *quaerens* = one who seeks. The plaintiff in the fictitious action terminating in the final concord (*see* p. 429), and usually the person acquiring the land.

Relief (pp. 28 etc.) Med. L. *relevium*. A money-payment made by the freehold tenant to the lord of the manor, or by the tenant by knight's service to his overlord, when he entered into his lands, being of full age.

Scutage (p. 28). Med. L. *scutagium*, from *scutum* = a shield. A tax on knights' fees, introduced in 1156 in lieu of military service.

Seisin (pp. 28 etc.). Med. L. *seisinare*. Possession in fact, or in law.

Synodals (p. 187). Gr. *σύνοδος* = meeting. Yearly payments due at the diocesan synods by parochial clergy "in honour of the episcopal chair," and possibly a sum reserved to the bishop upon the establishment of a separate parish.

Toft (p. 166). Med. L. *toftum*. The place where a house formerly stood.

Trental (p. 70). Ital. *trenta* = thirty. An office for the dead, consisting of thirty Masses.

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Printed in England at The Ballantyne Press
Spottiswoode, Ballantyne & Co. Ltd.
Colchester, London & Eton

to Marlow
Lower Woodend
to Marlow